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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on the compulsory education reforms introduced throughout the European Union from 1984-1994. Compulsory education that stage of education established formally by a government for the education of all children and young people, usually institutionalized on a full- or part-time basis, and compulsory for a certain number of years. The study was conducted using a two-part questionnaire, sent to all member states, with respondents addressing the most significant reforms in compulsory education in each nation during the specified years, their purpose or justification, assessment of their scope and significance, and procedures for implementation. Respondents were then asked to describe the situation before and after the reforms. A descriptive data sheet for each European Community Member State was compiled. The first part of the document presents a comparative, historical analysis of the reforms introduced by the Member States of the European Union and the European Free Trade Association/European Economic Area (EFTA/EEA) countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) in compulsory education and identifies the main trends. The second part of the report comprises individual descriptions of the national situations, country by country, and has been prepared and checked by the National Units in the Eurydice network. (Each country's report includes references.) (EH)

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A DECADE OF REFORMS AT COMPULSORY EDUCATION LEVEL IN THE EUROPEAN UNION* (1984-94)

* This survey also covers the EFTA/EEA countries.

EURYDICE
The Information Network on Education in Europe

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FOREWORD

There is an ever-increasing number of works on the education systems in Europe, often presenting a snapshot of the organisation of the systems in general or illuminating one particular aspect of their operation. It is less common to find information analysing the development of these systems over a given period of time, setting out the reforms which have been introduced, and covering all the Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries.[1] It must be admitted that this task is complex, not only because of the differences between the education systems in Europe but more especially because of the varying degrees of change to which they are regularly subject. It is however essential if the present 'shape' of the education systems and their development are to be understood. This is the challenge which this publication has tried to take up in tackling the question of the reforms in compulsory education in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries.

In view of the desire frequently expressed by policy makers and those in the education world for detailed information on the education reforms introduced throughout the European Union, the European Commission encouraged the Eurydice network to respond to this need. In order to provide a valid picture of the reforms and their scope, it was decided that the study should cover the decade 1984-94. To carry out this major undertaking, the Eurydice European Unit has worked closely with the Spanish National Unit in the network as it had indicated an interest in taking part in the project, and it has worked together with a team of academic experts to produce the study.

The first part of this document presents a comparative, historical analysis of the reforms introduced by the Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries in compulsory education and brings out the main trends. This analysis is under the total responsibility of its authors jointly with the Eurydice European Unit. The second part comprises individual descriptions of the national situations, country by country. These have been prepared and checked by the National Units in the network, which are therefore responsible for their content.

This publication is the result of very positive and fruitful cooperation between the European Unit and the Spanish Unit of Eurydice, in close association with the rest of the network which provided all the data on which the analysis was based and which has ensured the reliability of the final product. We hope that the information in this study will provide all those working in education with material for a better understanding of the recent development of compulsory education in the European Union and in the EFTA/EEA countries. It is important to have a reference tool to contribute to such understanding at a moment when the enlargement of the European Union and the changes brought about by the Treaty of Maastricht open up a new future in which the education systems will undoubtedly have a basic role to play.

Luce Pépin
Head of Eurydice European Unit
November 1996

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[1] Under the Agreement on the European Economic Area, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are participating in the activities of the Eurydice Network.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s, education systems in the European Union (EU) and the EFTA/EEA countries underwent numerous reforms which affected different areas and levels depending on the country concerned. Some were far-reaching and structural in nature, encompassing the entire education system of the country concerned and entailing complex modifications in all spheres of education. Most of these, however, although of considerable significance, affected only parts of a system. The changes introduced during the past decade throughout the whole educational scene in the EU and the EFTA/EEA countries seem to indicate that the social, cultural and economic demands as the century draws to a close have led Europe to redefine its educational policies and training systems.

The democratic nature of the political systems in Europe implies that such educational changes should be decided only after a wide-ranging process of social consultation intended to reach the broadest possible consensus. In some countries, educational reforms generate lively debate and may even be grounds for conflict between various sectors of society. However, the solutions adopted usually achieve the minimum consensus required for their approval, although there is never any lack of opponents to them, whether amongst politicians or teachers or parents themselves.

Of all the changes which have been introduced in the education systems, those involving compulsory education are especially important given their universal nature, since this stage of education is common to all young people, the future actors in the Europe of the twenty-first century. Thus, the purpose of this report is to contribute to a better understanding of these changes and their scope, and to identify the main characteristic trends in Europe.

The concept of **educational reform** is very complex and has been the subject of so many different interpretations that it is useful to clarify at the outset exactly what is meant by it in this study.

Beck and Arthur (1991) define reform as any educational innovation which refers to the initiation, implementation or abolition of policies designed to change the 'social product' of the educational process in line with specific ideological, economic and political priorities. However, it was necessary to define the term even more precisely and to limit its scope, since not all changes, superficial or more radical, transient or longer-lasting, are worthy of the name of reforms. The concept of reform adopted for this study is therefore:

any change in the education system which

- is intentional and far-reaching, responding to a specific educational policy and introduced with the intention that it should be lasting; and
- has emanated from the government or a regional education authority with full powers in education and has been translated into a binding legislative measure.

The meaning of **compulsory education** also requires further definition, even though it is a concept on which there is a much broader consensus. In this study, compulsory education is taken to be that stage of education established formally by a government for the education of all children and young people. This stage of the education system is generally institutionalised on a full-time or part-time basis and is compulsory for all for a certain number of years.

The study began in January 1994, when a two-part questionnaire drawn up by the research team in Spain, under the supervision of the European Unit, was sent out to each National Unit. The first part contained general questions concerning the most significant reforms in compulsory education between 1984 and 1994; their purpose or basic justification; an assessment of their scope and significance; and the procedures for their implementation. In the second part, information was requested on the reforms introduced in the various areas of compulsory education. In other words, countries were asked to describe the situation before and after the reforms. Owing to the historical approach, this task was not easy and partly explains the difficulties experienced by those concerned at national level.

The responses from the National Units were used to draw up a descriptive data sheet for each Member State, and these appear in **Part II**. Despite efforts to standardise them by means of agreements between the research team and the individual National Units, the flexibility required of a questionnaire of this type and the varying origins of the replies have resulted in a somewhat heterogeneous collection of data sheets, in terms of the arrangement of their content.

When the comparative study (**Part I**) was being undertaken, in view of the diversity of the education systems in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries, it was considered necessary to define the following headings, which serve as the **table of contents** for both the Member State data-sheets, and the comparative study.

1) **Aims**: the major objectives which a society, through its education system, defines for compulsory education.

2) **Structure of compulsory education**: the ages at which compulsory education begins and ends; its division into levels, phases and stages; its common core or diversified nature; final certificates awarded; the types of schools which are found; and how a particular school may be selected.

3) **Administration of education**: broken down into three sections. The first section, relating to the general administration of the system (macro-administration) analyses the various levels of decision-making concerning educational matters, distinguishing between the powers of the government, the regional levels of administration, the local authorities and the schools themselves. The second section tackles questions relating to the administration and management of schools (micro-administration). Finally, the third section is devoted to the distribution of responsibility for decision-making in relation to the financing of education.

4) **Curriculum**: responsibility for its development, content, teaching methodology, methods of evaluation, etc.

5) **Teaching staff**: description and means of entry to the profession, initial and in-service teacher training, and teachers' working conditions.

6) **Compensating for inequalities**: provision for pupils with special educational needs, distinguishing between socio-culturally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, pupils in special education, and ethnic and immigrant minorities.

7) **School support services**: in which a distinction is made between services within the school (mainly guidance centres) and support services outside the school.

8) **Evaluation and inspection**: institutions responsible for evaluating the various levels within compulsory education, procedures, staff responsible, etc.

These chapters are of varying lengths in the comparative report. The scope of the reforms varies, both qualitatively and quantitatively, depending on the area concerned. Thus, sections such as those on Administration or the Curriculum are much longer, given the number of Member States which have carried out significant reforms in these fields. On the other hand, other sections, such as School Support Services, are comparatively short as they have been little touched by reform.

In some cases, the complex nature of the information being handled made it difficult to define the content of each chapter precisely. This is due in part to the Member States' very diverse educational traditions, some of which are diametrically opposed to each other. A given aspect of education may be included in different sections by different countries, depending on how it is perceived and organised. In order to overcome this problem, an attempt has been made to achieve as far as possible unity of content of each part. Nonetheless, certain aspects affected by the reforms still contain elements which could have been included under more than one heading, which would only have led to redundancy. This was particularly the case in relation to the sections on Structures and Curriculum, Administration and Curriculum, and Compensating for Inequalities and School Support Services. So as to avoid repetition, elements liable to appear in several sections have been included in only one.

Nonetheless, it must be admitted that it has proved difficult to provide the dynamic, historical overview which was aimed at in the description of the education systems and their reforms. The Member State data sheets and the following comparative study focus more on the 'point of arrival' of the reforms than on the 'point of departure'. There is, of course, more or less explicit reference to the initial situation and to the changes, but the emphasis is placed on the present or, at least, on the currently evolving trend.

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PART I

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE REFORMS AT COMPULSORY EDUCATION LEVEL IN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE EFTA/EEA COUNTRIES (1984-94)

Responsibility for this part rests with the Spanish Unit of Eurydice
in cooperation with the Eurydice European Unit.

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1. AIMS

Whatever the education system under consideration, the principal aims of compulsory education are fundamentally always the same. Generically speaking, compulsory education has always been given the aim of providing all citizens with the basis of knowledge, ability and aptitude required for their social and professional integration into the community in which they live. It is precisely the stability required for the task assigned to compulsory education that explains why there have been few changes during the past decade.

Nevertheless, social conditions and the multiple demands which education is expected to satisfy have been changing at an accelerating pace. This has consequently given rise to variations in the scope, perspective and importance given to certain aims. In all countries, the scope of the objectives set for 'basic education' and the acquisition of skills of every type have been broadened. Aims related to regional approaches have been modified (due to widespread decentralisation in most countries), as have those associated with adapting to the world of the future (with a changing and unpredictable labour market and increasing migratory movements).

On the other hand, considerable emphasis has been placed on the strategies adopted to achieve these aims, turning them from mere declarations of principle into full realities. This development is explicit in Finland and Scotland but it can be said that most of the education policies of the Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries are implicitly following this path.

With the exception of Spain, very few countries refer to any change in aims and, perhaps because there have been no changes, others do not even say what the general goals of their education system in fact are. However, the current preparation for change (Belgium and Scotland) and the continuation of education after compulsory education could be seen as the establishment of new general objectives for compulsory education. In addition to adopting certain policy measures, this implies instilling in pupils the right attitudes for continued learning (Denmark, France, Sweden, Scotland and Norway). Decentralisation (Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Finland) or conversely, the achievement of a certain curricular unity within compulsory education (Sweden, England and Wales and Nothern Ireland) implies to some extent a change of outlook with respect to the aims of education.

In addition to stability, the aims of European Union and EFTA/EEA countries show great similarity, as was to be expected. Nevertheless, certain subtle variations may be found between them, or at least between the ways in which each formulates the major general aims of its compulsory education. In order to compare them, aims were grouped into six major core themes, inspired by the OECD categories (1983), with appropriate corrections to adjust them to the actual responses of the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries: equal social opportunities for all citizens without distinction; basic education for the population; promoting both stability and social change; preparing children for adult life; acquiring the motivation to continue learning and to prepare for a changing world; and the well-being or personal development of the individual.

1. All European Union and EFTA/EEA countries, from their different perspectives, aim to achieve **genuine equality of opportunities**, to avoid exclusion on social, economic, physical, psychological or any other grounds and to put into practice positive discrimination wherever it is considered necessary. The OECD states that 'From a situation in which an abstract "equality of opportunity" was seen to be a sufficient goal, we have moved to one in which "unequal" children are actively helped to become equal' (OECD, 1983, p. 13). And this affirmation is without doubt entirely applicable to the situation in Europe.

Thus, although the ideal objective of education systems apparently continues to be the same as it has always been, there has been a qualitative change which is reflected more in initiatives designed to compensate for inequalities than in declarations of principle. Be that as it may, among the stated aims of some countries we find some which may be considered as espousing the spirit of equal opportunities: free access to education and equality within the education system in Belgium and Greece; protection of the right to education and democratisation of the system in Spain; the concept of education as a public service in France; the right of all citizens to education and the duty of the government not to discriminate in Italy; the right to education and priority for compensating for individual and regional inequalities in Portugal; and free schooling to guarantee the right to education in Scotland.

The policies adopted in Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg and Portugal - that is to say, the extension of compulsory education in terms of both numbers of pupils and duration - are very much the result of an aspiration to equality. The Nordic countries, which have a long tradition of organising their education systems in a single all-through structure embracing the whole of compulsory education, appear as pioneers here.

2. Another indisputable aim of compulsory education is to **provide the population with basic education.** What does vary according to the country and the period is the notion of 'basic education', these variations being due in the main to the criteria required for being considered an informed citizen. On the one hand, this variation can result in a tendency to prolong compulsory education and, on the other, in continual extensions to the curricula, as has occurred in various countries (Belgium, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Northern Ireland and Iceland).

   In some countries, compulsory education aims explicitly to provide all pupils with a basic education including a basic, broad and balanced curriculum (Belgium, Greece, Ireland, England and Wales, Scotland and Norway). For the most part, there is mention of acquiring basic skills and methods of working (Belgium, Denmark, Spain and France) or essential knowledge (in primary education in the Netherlands). However, the actual content of the basic skills or essential knowledge has changed substantially over recent years, as will be seen in the section devoted to the curriculum.

3. **Promoting both stability and social change** are two objectives which, though they may appear contradictory, are seen as complementary. On the one hand, the mission of compulsory education is to transmit knowledge and respect for the cultural and historic heritage, the social institutions and the traditions of each country and of humanity in general. On the other hand, it must foster innovation and social mobility through a more ambitious education, providing new generations with the cognitive and attitudinal tools to help them attain higher levels of achievement. However, the one cannot be achieved without the other, so that without strengthening its roots in the past and the established order, it is difficult to innovate and build the future, and, conversely, without development and improvement, social stability is ultimately threatened.

   Although this objective has not altered, it has in a sense been reinforced through the greater movements towards autonomous regions, the growing participation of society in educational matters and the promotion of knowledge about local cultures. All of these elements essential to the achievement of harmony between the aims of stability and social change, since they provide a greater wealth of nuances in educational approach, allow the voices of minorities to be heard and take into account the complexity of the cultural situation.

   Several countries have progressed along this path. Others, such as Germany or the United Kingdom, already had a much more 'locally-based' tradition. Some countries explicitly cite one of the aims of the system as being to achieve stability and social progress (Portugal, United Kingdom) or respect for pluralism and education for peace

(Greece, Spain). Only the Netherlands and Scotland state the aim of catering for the multicultural nature of their societies and ensuring respect for various social values.

4. In all education systems, compulsory education has always **had the task of preparing children for adult and working life, leisure, the family and society**. Nevertheless, in practice, this has frequently been abbreviated to preparing them for working life. This came about for historical reasons: education systems were born and developed during the era of industrialisation, and compulsory education for all was primarily seen as a way of preparing the future labour force.

Nevertheless, various circumstances specific to our own era have meant that this aim has indeed changed considerably in content even if its formulation has not changed. On the one hand, schools necessarily have to take responsibility for transmitting social norms, and no longer only the family or the local community, as in simpler societies. On the other hand, the world of employment has become much more uncertain and complex. Finally, leisure has now become an increasingly important part of people's lives, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. This makes their preparation for the various increasingly inter-related spheres of adult life a vital requirement.

Some countries (France and Scotland) already explicitly mention among their aims the ability to adapt to a future society. The Flemish Community of Belgium, as well as Spain, Ireland and Scotland, mention among their general objectives preparation for working life or integration into the economic world, and England and Wales mention general preparation for the responsibilities and opportunities of adult life. Many countries mention participation in society or the exercise of citizenship. In the case of Spain, there is explicit mention of the country's new form of government (democracy) and the need to teach all children to participate in it. In Portugal, too, the development of democracy is mentioned as a new aim.

5. Another of the stated aims of compulsory education is for pupils to acquire the **motivation to continue learning and to prepare themselves for a changing world**. This means making them wish to continue their education beyond compulsory schooling - both in traditional education and in the various forms of in-service training. Attainment of this objective involves both stimulating pupils' creativity and sense of initiative and the existence of policies for extending schooling for a high percentage of each age group. This implies that educational planners should have a clear and explicit desire to prepare for the future, or more specifically to give pupils a desire for training which will grow of its own accord and later provide them with the means to bring it to fruition.

Some countries refer clearly to aims related to change or to the prospects of future learning. Belgium, France and Scotland are the most explicit, both in terms of citing learning to learn and openness and flexibility towards change as their goals, and in maintaining as a political priority the achievement of a high percentage of enrolment in post-compulsory secondary education. In Denmark, the aim of encouraging pupils' desire to learn and fostering their creativity and sense of initiative follows this line of approach. In Portugal, one of the aims of *ensino básico* is to stimulate the taste for a continuous updating of knowledge. In England and Wales, specific education and training targets have been set for those completing compulsory education and for lifelong learning. Similarly, the educational objectives in Finland emphasise creativity.

6. Finally, a group of objectives not mentioned hitherto has to be considered: these pertain **to the well-being of children whilst they are at school**, and to education as an end in itself. All the other aims are directed more towards the future, to the life of individuals after leaving school. However, education must also serve present needs, and it is important for children to have a satisfactory experience of school, and for them to feel that school meets all their various needs. 'Finally, it is important not to overlook one of the most fundamental yet simple goals of compulsory schooling - that school itself should

be worthwhile not only in a future but also in a present context' (OECD, 1983, p. 19). In all likelihood, this is the way every country fundamentally views it (although virtually none of them include a literal statement of this as one of the aims of compulsory education), since all of them mention personal or all-round development, which may be considered as closely related to the achievement of well-being. The only country which speaks of promoting pupils' happiness and personal development is Belgium (French and Flemish Communities). Some countries also refer to aims approaching that of personal well-being, such as catering for psychological development (in primary education in the Netherlands) or meeting individual needs (United Kingdom) or enhancing well-being and quality of life for society as a whole (Greece, Ireland). The Danish Act refers to the furtherance of the all-round development of the individual pupil. In Austria, the new programme (1986) for primary education is centred on the pupils' well-being with the organisation of freer teaching methodologies.

As can be seen, the aims or purposes of compulsory education are very similar in all countries, subject to a few logical nuances due to cultural and historical differences and the varying degrees of clarification which each of them provided. Perhaps if the analysis had gone into the specific aims of primary and secondary education, greater variations would have been found. However, this study aims to be global in character and to identify general trends. In this sense, it is encouraging to observe the fundamental agreement between Member States of the EU and the EFTA/EEA countries on a point as important as the major aims of their education systems.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Compulsory education structures in the various countries are diverse, but the majority of them - with a few exceptions, as in the case of Spain and Portugal - have undergone no major changes in the past decade to compare with those made in the 1960s. In most cases the duration of compulsory education has been prolonged or the structure and organisation of the curriculum has been altered slightly, in the sense of modifying one or other of its stages or divisions into cycles.

Two contrasting phenomena have also occurred: the consolidation of a common curriculum in some countries, and a partial diversification of the common core syllabus in others. In general, depending on the point of departure, a trend can be observed towards a balance between a common core curriculum and diversification, as well as the replacement of short, rigid time divisions (such as those of school years) by other broader and more flexible divisions (cycles or stages).

Over this decade, some type of reform in compulsory education structures has been introduced by Belgium (1983) and later again by the Flemish Community of Belgium (1989), Spain (1990), France (1989), Luxembourg (1984, 1989, 1990 and 1993), the Netherlands (1985 and 1993), Portugal (1987), Finland (1983), Northern Ireland (1989) and Iceland (1989).

In order to follow a thematic order, the comparison between the structures in the various education systems has been made on the basis of the following parameters: the concept of compulsory education and its mode of institutionalisation (that is, the possible existence of different types of school and their selection by pupils); its duration; models of compulsory schooling or types of structure (unitary or divided into stages, common core curriculum or various branches, etc.); and the certificates awarded upon completion of compulsory education.

2.1. THE CONCEPT OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND ITS INSTITUTIONALISATION

The concepts of **compulsory education and compulsory schooling** are often very close, although they are not exactly the same. By compulsory schooling we mean the stage which a state formally establishes for the full-time or part-time institutionalised education of children and young persons (generally speaking, school), and which is compulsory in nature for a specific number of years. On the other hand, the concept of compulsory education is more wide-ranging and, although it also implies the obligation for children to receive education during a specific period as determined by the state, this education does not necessarily have to be institutionalised.

In contemporary, developed societies, it is generally accepted that children should be kept at school during a sufficient period of time for them to acquire a basic education. European countries adopted this principle as early as the 19th century and developing countries are still aspiring to it as an ideal. In some western countries, the concept of compulsory education has been a subject of debate; others have for a long time applied a principle of subsidiarity according to which the State filled the gaps left by private sector provision (private and church schools, etc.); in a third group of countries, compulsory education has existed at legislative level although this has not been implemented in reality until recently (in the sense of schooling stopping before the official leaving age or not being provided for the entire population group concerned). However, the idea of making compulsory schooling a reality and achieving this under the best possible conditions is, and always has been, a unanimous aspiration.

For the majority of the EU Member States and the EFTA/EEA countries, compulsory education is synonymous with compulsory schooling, except in Denmark, Austria, Finland, the United Kingdom, Norway and to a lesser extent Belgium, where parents are not obliged to send their children to school provided that they themselves provide their education. Nevertheless, in countries where compulsory education is up to age 18, schooling in the final years may be part-time (Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands).

Information on the **institutionalisation of compulsory schooling** is scarce for all countries, probably because very few reforms have occurred with respect to the types of educational institutions available for families to choose from and the distribution of pupils over the schools, except for England and Wales, where there have been considerable changes in the types of educational institutions with the introduction of grant-maintained schools, City Technology Colleges and specialist technology and language colleges.

The majority of countries do not touch upon the question of the ideological/religious character of their schools, doubtless because no changes have taken place in this respect. In most countries, public sector schools are neutral in ideology but coexist with privately-owned confessional schools which are supported to a greater or lesser extent out of public funds.

The situation as regards freedom to select schools varies from country to country. In Spain and in the Netherlands, where there is a considerable state-funded private sector in education, the choice of school (public or private) is subject to admission criteria. In England and Wales, if a publicly funded school is oversubscribed, admission is based on specific criteria such as proximity to the child's home. On the other hand, secondary schools are now allowed to select up to 15 % of their pupils on the basis of ability. Competition between schools and parental choice are being stimulated so as to raise the quality of education provided. The same thing seems to be happening in Denmark and in Italy. In Scotland, geographical proximity continues to be the predominant criterion for allocating school places, although placement variations occur in urban areas, and are theoretically possible everywhere.

2.2. DURATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

There is a constant trend to prolong the duration of compulsory schooling from which it may be concluded that keeping children at school for a maximum number of years is considered in itself to be a good thing. Underlying this trend is a wide variety of motivations. In the first place, society believes today as strongly as in the 1950s in the value of education as a means for individual and collective advancement: in the 'information society' which characterises the end of our century, a country's greatest wealth lies in the educational standard of its citizens. However, in many cases, the prolongation of schooling serves to delay the entry into the job market of young people who have a slim chance of finding employment.

The duration of compulsory education in the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries varies between eight years (Italy), nine years (Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and Norway), 10 years (Spain, France and Iceland), 11 years (Luxembourg, England and Wales and Scotland) and more than 11 years (Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands, if years of part-time schooling are counted, and Northern Ireland).

Over the decade 1984-94, almost half of the countries have extended compulsory schooling by one, two or even three years. In general, such extensions went in the direction of keeping pupils in the same system and compulsory education was thus prolonged until age 15, 16 or 18. In Denmark and Finland, for many years, and in Liechtenstein since 1992, pupils who have completed compulsory education have the option of an additional tenth year of basic education. Compulsory education generally starts at age 6, but some countries have opted to start compulsory education at age 5 (Netherlands) and even at age 4 (Luxembourg and Northern Ireland) With the exception of Iceland, where compulsory education has started at age 6 since 1991, the Nordic countries have the latest official starting age for compulsory education. In Finland and Sweden, however, although the starting age is officially 7 years, current practice is to bring forward the age of school entry by a year.

Despite this tendency to lengthen the period of schooling, the issue of the duration of compulsory schooling is highly controversial. The difficulty of providing extended education under optimal conditions for pupils who are sometimes poorly motivated has renewed the debate on the patterns of compulsory schooling, which can be very diverse and must accommodate all of the population in certain specific age groups in a way that is both equitable and appropriate to a wide variety of circumstances and abilities.

> To stay willy-nilly in school for five or six years is one thing; to stay for nine or ten is quite another, especially when the three or four additional years correspond almost exactly with the turbulent period of adolescence and when puberty arrives at an earlier age than in the past. This is not to advocate a case for reducing compulsory schooling, but simply to stress that the longer it lasts the more its nature changes and the more what seems like the very success of enlightened reformers may turn sour (OECD, 1983, p. 11).

2.3. MODELS OF COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

The controversy surrounding the advantages and disadvantages of each type of structure in the school system and its impact on equal opportunities, the quality of education, academic results and pupil well-being is already of long-standing. In the main, underlying measures aimed at extending the duration of the compulsory common core education for all types of pupils and all types of school is a philosophy which places the emphasis on equity, equal opportunities and the well-being or happiness of pupils, rather than the academic aspects of the curriculum, the achievement of high grades in school results and competitiveness. The most extreme version of this current of thought is aptly reflected in the words of Clive Beck:

> To begin with, schools should be comprehensive, that is, students of different socio-economic backgrounds and scholastic achievement levels should be educated in the same schools and in the same classes... Placing all students in the same school and stream makes the statement that a) all these students are of equal worth as human beings; b) all have extensive innate ability with the same range of innate ability within each socio-economic grouping; and c) all can benefit from a roughly similar education, are capable of living 'the good life' (which does not differ fundamentally from class to class) and are equally entitled to do so (Beck, 1990, p. 17).

In all countries of Europe, to a greater or lesser degree, this thinking has inspired the great reforms which totally revolutionised education systems during the 1960s and 1970s and continues to inspire reforms in some countries (such as Spain) which had not yet advanced sufficiently in this direction. Nevertheless, in other countries measures are being taken to correct what they consider to be excessive 'uniformity', moderating it with a greater degree of diversification.

Compulsory schooling structures are quite different from one country to another. Firstly, as regards the **division** (or otherwise) of the compulsory period **into stages or cycles**, three different situations occur:

- Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway (where the school structure has remained unchanged throughout the decade) and Portugal (which introduced its *Ensino Básico* in 1986) are the six countries where compulsory education takes place with no division between primary and secondary. In Spain, the other country which previously had a similar arrangement, this system was abandoned in 1990.
- In the other countries, compulsory education is divided into two separate stages, primary and secondary, usually in two different types of school. In such cases, it is usual for children to be in primary education until they reach the age of 12, except in France, Italy and part of the United Kingdom (excluding Scotland), where they move on to secondary education at 11 years of age, and in the majority of the *Länder* in Germany and in Austria where secondary education begins at the age of 10 years.

- In Luxembourg, the start of compulsory schooling set at an earlier age, since 1993, does not coincide with that of primary education, but instead the two first years are spent in pre-school education.

Compulsory education structures also depend on a concept of **more or less differentiated streams of secondary education.** Three different types of solution are also found here:

- In most countries, the whole of compulsory secondary schooling follows a common core syllabus, that is to say the same basic curriculum is provided, albeit with scope for internal diversification options.[2] This single-stream formula seems to be the most prevalent and the structural reforms carried out in recent years have all gone in this direction. This common core organisation also obviously includes those systems with an all-through single structure.
- Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and Liechtenstein are the only countries which maintain a diversified secondary education system, such that pupils have to choose between various educational paths at the end of primary school (at 10 to 12 years of age). However, some of these countries have established new schools in which the various educational paths coexist or are even integrated in a common core.
- France has adopted an intermediate solution. Upper secondary education begins one year before completion of compulsory education and pupils thus choose their future career paths during their final compulsory year. In Finland, the *peruskoulu/grundskola* Act of 1983 abolished the different levels of courses which channelled pupils into different streams for the last stage (three years) of *peruskoulu/grundskola.*

The graphs on pages 22 to 25 summarise, firstly, the modifications made to compulsory education structures in the European Union and in the EFTA/EEA countries between 1983/84 and 1993/94, and secondly, differences in structure between countries. It can be seen that in most of the countries there were no major changes during that decade. The extended duration of compulsory schooling was significant in Spain and Portugal (raising the leaving age), as well as in Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland and Iceland (lowering the entry age). Also of note are a reduction in the structural complexity in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Luxembourg, a slight increase in diversification in France and a division into two stages in Spain. The diagrams also show the difference mentioned above between the single continuous structure or common core syllabus structures up to the end of lower secondary level, and structures which are diversified into branches or educational paths starting from the beginning of secondary schooling, at 10 to 12 years of age.

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[2] Since the start of the 1993/94 school year, VBO, MAVO, HAVO and VWO all begin with a period of basic secondary education *(basisvorming)*, lasting three years. The aim is to give pupils between the ages of 12 and 15 a broad general education with no strict dividing line between general and technical subjects. *Basisvorming* is not a separate type of school, but a reform of the curriculum which applies across the board to all types of secondary school that follow on directly from primary school.

2.4. CERTIFICATION AT THE END OF COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

The existence of external examinations for transfer from one stage of the school system to another, and of the certificates awarded at the end of such stages, is very much related to the comprehensive or selective character of education. Thus, the development in this respect in European countries has paralleled progress in the democratisation of education and the extension of schooling. That is to say, in most countries, external examinations at the end of primary school were abolished some time ago (except in Luxembourg,[3] where they are now much less selective in character). Examinations at the end of compulsory secondary education have also tended to disappear (except in Ireland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway).

On the other hand, most countries support a **single certificate** at the end of compulsory schooling. Many countries have reformed their systems of examination, assessment and certification at the end of compulsory education, with the aim of removing any possible discrimination which, at such an early age, can excessively determine young people's academic and professional future.

Spain, Ireland and the United Kingdom are good examples of this trend. In Spain, since its 1990 reform, one single certificate has been awarded at the end of compulsory education without an external examination *(Certificado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria)* and this replaces the previous system under which pupils obtained different certificates according to whether or not they had successfully completed the compulsory education phase. In Ireland, the first session of the Junior Certificate examinations took place in June 1992, to assess the performance levels of pupils at the end of compulsory education. In the United Kingdom (England and Wales), the dual system of public examinations for pupils at the end of compulsory education was replaced from 1988 by the General Certificate of Secondary Education. Scotland, for its part, has established the single-examination system of Standard Grades. However, other reforms such as those in Italy confirm this trend towards a single type of certificate at the end of compulsory schooling.

On the other hand, in countries where compulsory secondary education is diversified, the qualifications awarded at the end of this period of schooling differ according to the subjects studied and consequently, provide access to different branches of post-compulsory education.

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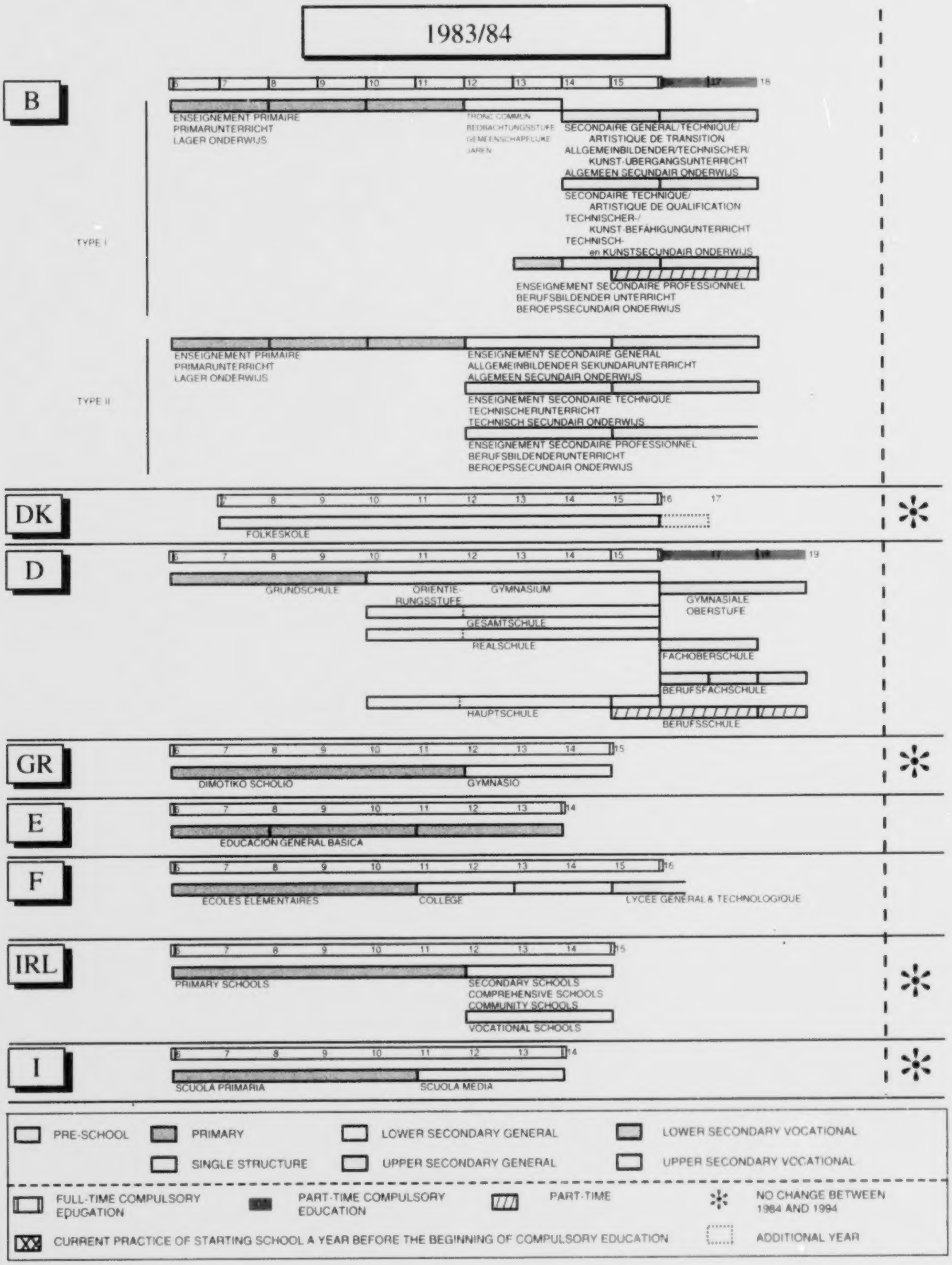
[3] From the school year 1997/98, the entry examinations to secondary education will be abolished and replaced by a more flexible form of pupil guidance.

STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN THE MEMBER STATES


1983/84
B
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 17 18
ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE
PRIMARUNTERRICHT
LAGER ONDERWIJS
TRONC COMMUN
BEOBACHTUNGSSTUFE
GEMEENSCHAPELIJKE
JAREN
SECONDAIRE GENERAL/TECHNIQUE/ ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
ALLGEMEINBILDENDER/TECHNISCHER/ KUNST-UBERGANGSUNTERRICHT
ALGEMEEN SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
SECONDAIRE TECHNIQUE/ ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
TECHNISCHER-/ KUNST-BEFÄHIGUNGUNTERRICHT
TECHNISCH- en KUNSTSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE PROFESSIONNEL
BERUFSBILDENDER UNTERRICHT
BEROEPSSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
TYPE I
ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE
PRIMARUNTERRICHT
LAGER ONDERWIJS
ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE GENERAL
ALLGEMEINBILDENDER SEKUNDARUNTERRICHT
ALGEMEEN SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE TECHNIQUE
TECHNISCHERUNTERRICHT
TECHNISCH SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE PROFESSIONNEL
BERUFSBILDENDERUNTERRICHT
BEROEPSSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS
TYPE II
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FOLKESKOLE
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ORIENTIE-RUNGSSTUFE
GYMNASIUM
GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE
GESAMTSCHULE
REALSCHULE
FACHOBERSCHULE
BERUFSFACHSCHULE
HAUPTSCHULE
BERUFSSCHULE
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EDUCACION GENERAL BASICA
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ECOLES ELEMENTAIRES
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LYCEE GENERAL & TECHNOLOGIQUE
IRL
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PRIMARY SCHOOLS
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS
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SCUOLA PRIMARIA
SCUOLA MEDIA
PRE-SCHOOL
PRIMARY
LOWER SECONDARY GENERAL
LOWER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
SINGLE STRUCTURE
UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL
UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME
NO CHANGE BETWEEN 1984 AND 1994
CURRENT PRACTICE OF STARTING SCHOOL A YEAR BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION
ADDITIONAL YEAR

Explanatory note

When the end of compulsory education does not coincide with the end of a stage of education, the lines are extended and left open to indicate the continuation of that stage.

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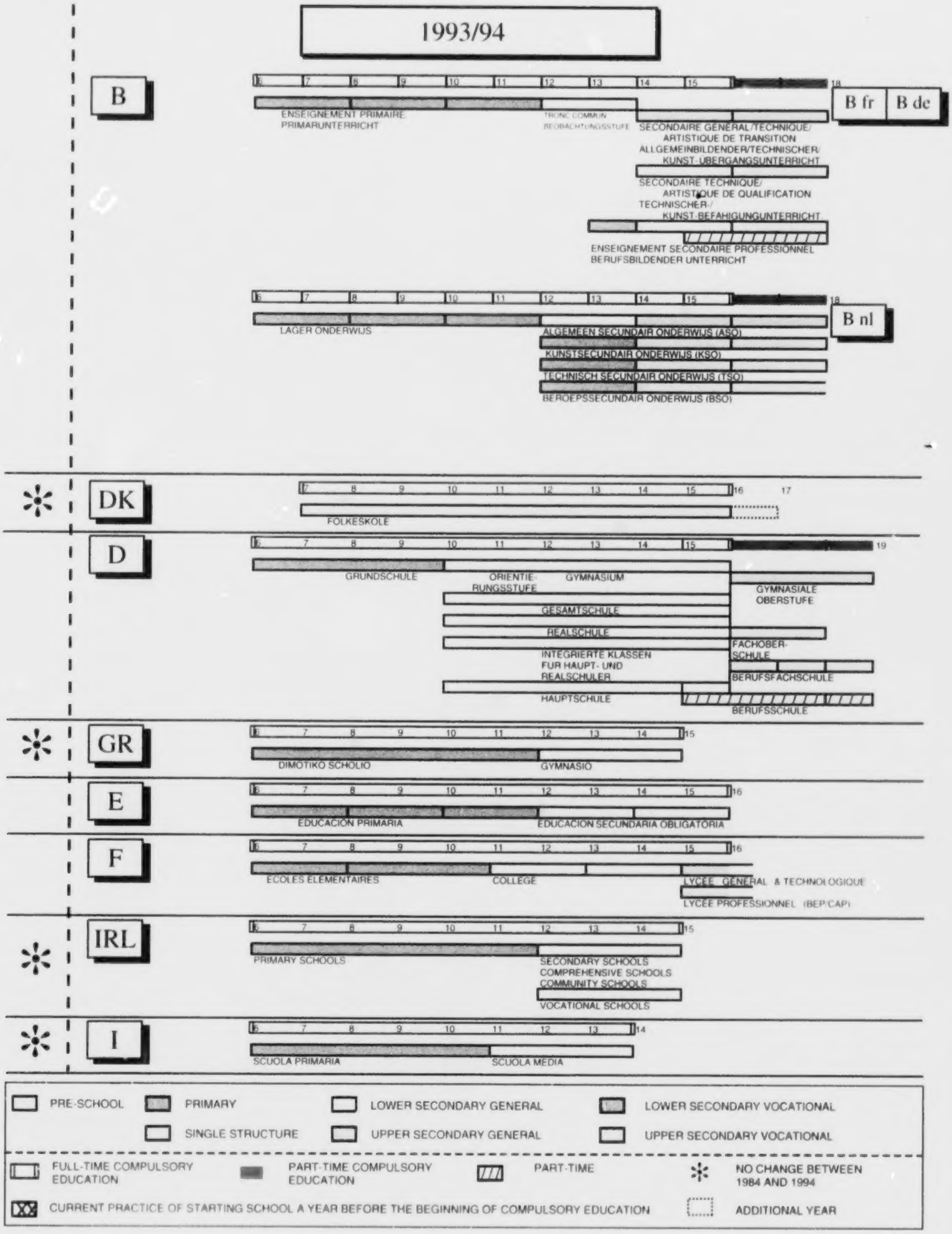
1993/94
B
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ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE
PRIMARUNTERRICHT
TRONC COMMUN
BEOBACHTUNGSSTUFE
SECONDAIRE GENERAL/TECHNIQUE/ ARTISTIQUE DE TRANSITION
ALLGEMEINBILDENDER/TECHNISCHER/ KUNST-UBERGANGSUNTERRICHT
SECONDAIRE TECHNIQUE/ ARTISTIQUE DE QUALIFICATION
TECHNISCHER-/ KUNST-BEFAHIGUNGUNTERRICHT
ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE PROFESSIONNEL
BERUFSBILDENDER UNTERRICHT
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B nl
LAGER ONDERWIJS
ALGEMEEN SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (ASO)
KUNSTSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (KSO)
TECHNISCH SECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (TSO)
BEROEPSSECUNDAIR ONDERWIJS (BSO)
DK
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
FOLKESKOLE
D
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 19
GRUNDSCHULE
ORIENTIE-RUNGSSTUFE
GYMNASIUM
GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE
GESAMTSCHULE
REALSCHULE
FACHOBER-SCHULE
INTEGRIERTE KLASSEN FUR HAUPT- UND REALSCHULER
BERUFSFACHSCHULE
HAUPTSCHULE
BERUFSSCHULE
GR
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DIMOTIKO SCHOLIO
GYMNASIO
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EDUCACION PRIMARIA
EDUCACION SECUNDARIA OBLIGATORIA
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ECOLES ELEMENTAIRES
COLLEGE
LYCEE GENERAL & TECHNOLOGIQUE
LYCEE PROFESSIONNEL (BEP/CAP)
IRL
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS
I
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
SCUOLA PRIMARIA
SCUOLA MEDIA
PRE-SCHOOL
PRIMARY
LOWER SECONDARY GENERAL
LOWER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
SINGLE STRUCTURE
UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL
UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME
NO CHANGE BETWEEN 1984 AND 1994
CURRENT PRACTICE OF STARTING SCHOOL A YEAR BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION
ADDITIONAL YEAR

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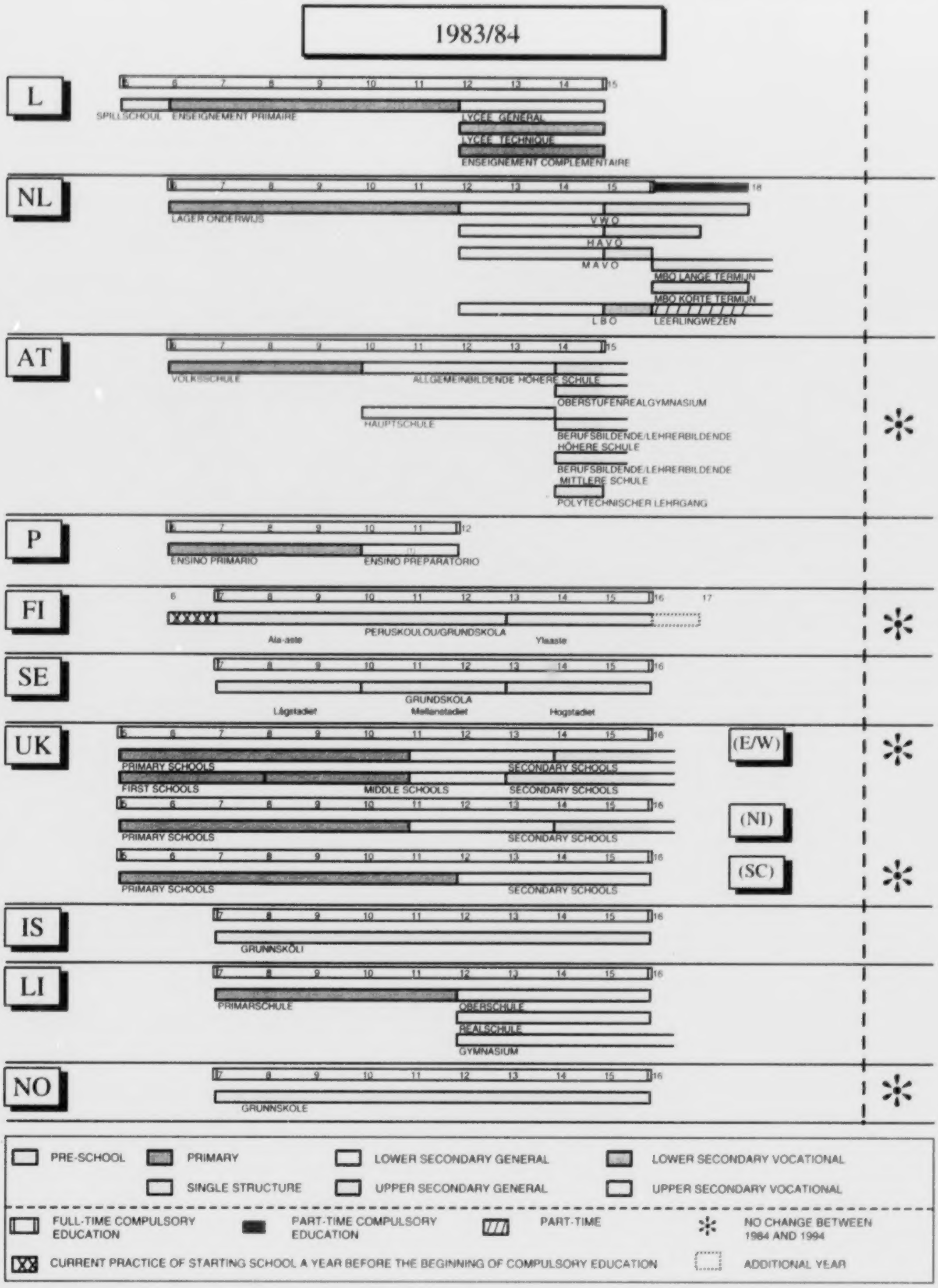
STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN THE MEMBER STATES


1983/84
L
SPILLSCHOUL
ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE
LYCEE GENERAL
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ENSEIGNEMENT COMPLEMENTAIRE
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LAGER ONDERWIJS
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MBO LANGE TERMIJN
MBO KORTE TERMIJN
L B O
LEERLINGWEZEN
AT
VOLKSSCHULE
ALLGEMEINBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE
OBERSTUFENREALGYMNASIUM
HAUPTSCHULE
BERUFSBILDENDE/LEHRERBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE
BERUFSBILDENDE/LEHRERBILDENDE MITTLERE SCHULE
POLYTECHNISCHER LEHRGANG
P
ENSINO PRIMARIO
ENSINO PREPARATORIO
FI
PERUSKOULOU/GRUNDSKOLA
Ala-aste
Ylaaste
SE
GRUNDSKOLA
Lågstadiet
Mellanstadiet
Hogstadiet
UK
(E/W)
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
FIRST SCHOOLS
MIDDLE SCHOOLS
(NI)
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PRIMARSCHULE
OBERSCHULE
REALSCHULE
GYMNASIUM
NO
GRUNNSKOLE
PRE-SCHOOL
PRIMARY
LOWER SECONDARY GENERAL
LOWER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
SINGLE STRUCTURE
UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL
UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME
NO CHANGE BETWEEN 1984 AND 1994
CURRENT PRACTICE OF STARTING SCHOOL A YEAR BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION
ADDITIONAL YEAR

(1) P: Preparatory education.

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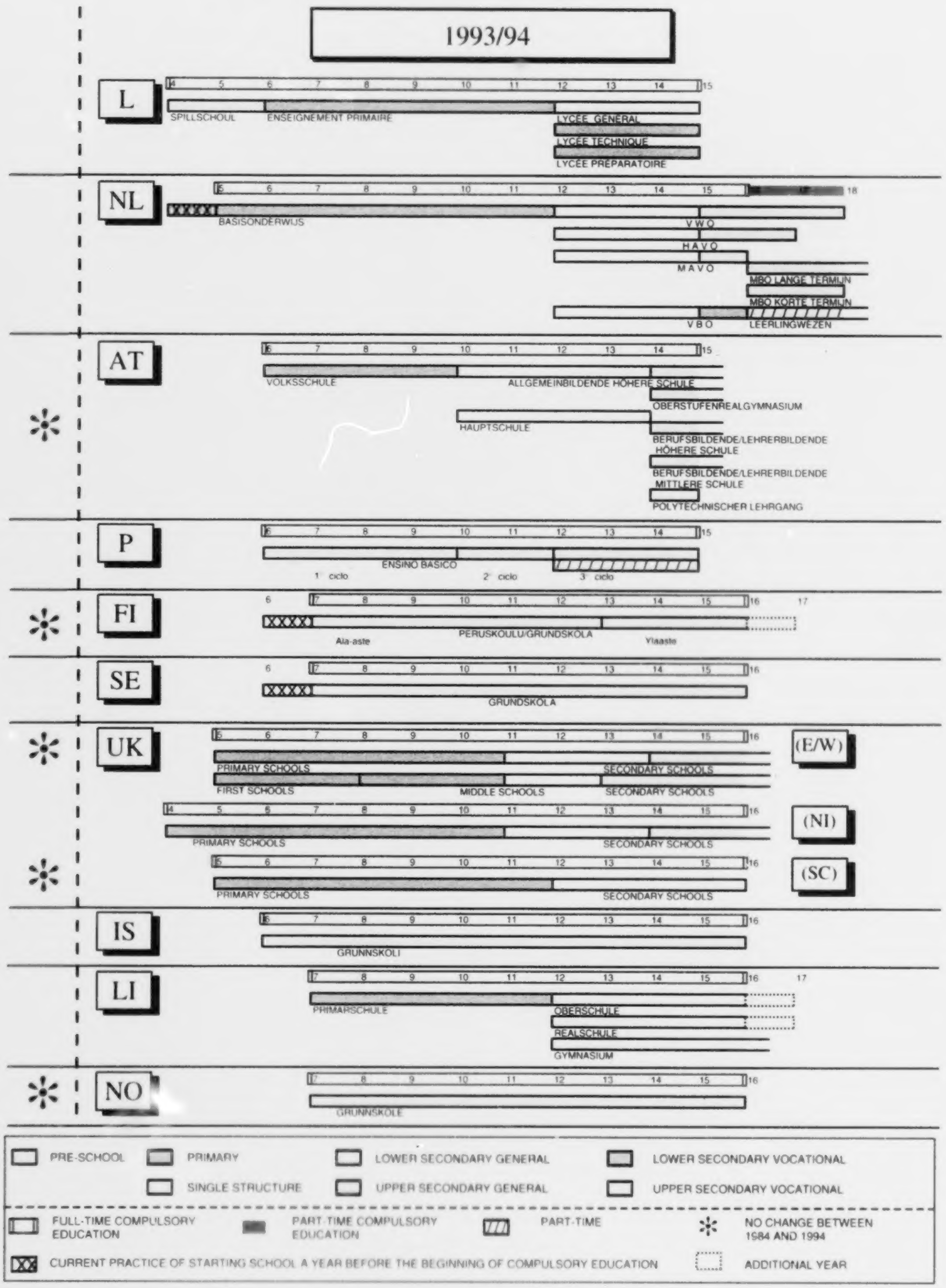
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ENSEIGNEMENT PRIMAIRE
LYCÉE GÉNÉRAL
LYCÉE TECHNIQUE
LYCÉE PRÉPARATOIRE
NL
BASISONDERWIJS
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H A V O
M A V O
MBO LANGE TERMIJN
MBO KORTE TERMIJN
V B O
LEERLINGWEZEN
AT
VOLKSSCHULE
ALLGEMEINBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE
OBERSTUFENREALGYMNASIUM
HAUPTSCHULE
BERUFSBILDENDE/LEHRERBILDENDE HÖHERE SCHULE
BERUFSBILDENDE/LEHRERBILDENDE MITTLERE SCHULE
POLYTECHNISCHER LEHRGANG
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1° ciclo
2° ciclo
3° ciclo
FI
Ala-aste
PERUSKOULU/GRUNDSKOLA
Yläaste
SE
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UK
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PRIMARY SCHOOLS
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OBERSCHULE
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GYMNASIUM
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PRE-SCHOOL
PRIMARY
SINGLE STRUCTURE
LOWER SECONDARY GENERAL
UPPER SECONDARY GENERAL
LOWER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL
FULL-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME COMPULSORY EDUCATION
PART-TIME
NO CHANGE BETWEEN 1984 AND 1994
CURRENT PRACTICE OF STARTING SCHOOL A YEAR BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION
ADDITIONAL YEAR

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3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

One of the fundamental aspects of reform in education systems in the EU Member States and EFTA/EEA countries during the decade 1984-94 has been the changes in education administration, and above all in the redistribution of decision-making responsibilities to the various levels, from the central, government or national level to the schools via the regional and local levels.

In spite of the fact that such a division of responsibilities may be considered as a logical sequence, we have chosen to distinguish between reforms which at a **general** level affect decision-making by the various education administrations, and those more related to the management and organisation of **schools**. Owing to their importance, we also describe the reforms which have been introduced in the financing of education.

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The reforms in the general administration of the education system have been fundamentally a progressive **decentralisation and delegation of powers to society**. In practically all countries, new regulations have been introduced entailing a transfer of decision-making from the central state down to regional, local and municipal levels, and thence to schools. In addition, we are seeing **greater participation of the educational community** in decision-making processes.

During recent decades in countries with centralised systems, trends towards decentralisation have enjoyed much support. The arguments in favour of this are already familiar:

- greater efficiency, both in the definition of needs and the use of resources, in problem-solving, as the function is transferred by the central authority to bodies which, due to their proximity, are better acquainted with the situation and able to find speedier solutions;
- greater participation of citizens by bringing services closer to users;
- and finally, a better match of the organisation of the system to local and regional variations.

Not insignificant either are views of a political nature to the effect that decentralisation strengthens participation and is closely linked with democratisation, in that it is a regional redistribution of power. In other words, it brings decision-making closer to intermediate regional bodies which participate in the system or organisation through its democratically-elected representative bodies.

In determining the extent of the centralisation or decentralisation of a country's educational administration, it is useful to analyse the degree of decision-making power exercised by each level of the territorial organisation in the following fields: **planning the education system**, that is to say, who determines the levels and stages which will constitute the education system, the number of years within such stages, the duration of compulsory schooling, or the requirements for promotion from one educational level to another; **decisions concerning the curriculum** – who decides the objectives, content, methods and criteria for evaluation at each of the stages in the education system; **questions related to teaching and non-teaching staff** – who employs teachers and non-teaching staff, who decides on the geographical allocation of staff and their functions; **evaluation and inspection of the system** and the **funding of education and the administration of economic resources** – what is the source of funding for education and who is responsible for managing such funds?

In most cases, with the exception of Belgium and Germany, which are markedly decentralised because of their federal structures, it is the central authorities which play the main, if not exclusive, political, administrative and legislative role in establishing the **general organisation**

of the education system. In effect, it is the governments of the respective states which assume responsibility for controlling and managing the education systems by means of appropriate regulations, although this power is found in the hands of the linguistic Communities in Belgium and the *Länder* in Germany. In England and Wales, where local government authorities formerly enjoyed considerable delegated authority, successive legislation has transferred many powers from local government authorities to central government on the one hand, and to school and college governing bodies on the other. In Belgium, responsibility for the organisation of the education system was transferred in 1989 to the Communities, except for deciding the age when compulsory schooling should begin and end, setting minimum requirements for the award of university qualifications, and pension arrangements, which remain matters for the national government. With the exception of Belgium and England and Wales, there have been no changes in the distribution of powers in the other Member States during the past decade.

One of the problems which emerges when tackling the issue of the distribution of responsibilities for **establishing the curriculum** is to find the balance struck between the various institutions concerned. Political and social motives may lead countries to opt either to confer total responsibility for the curriculum on the central government or to grant schools full freedom in curricular decisions, some kind of intermediate situation also being possible. Nevertheless, all countries must take into account the following issues in defining the school curriculum:

- Firstly, the curriculum must guarantee minimum common objectives and content for qualifications to be recognised throughout the territory.
- However, all regional and local aspects must be included (geographical, historical, social, cultural and economic, and in some cases also linguistic) in order to avoid its being out of touch with the day-to-day realities of its pupils.
- Furthermore, the characteristics of each particular school must be taken into account, i.e the distinctive nature of the local community in which the school is located, and, in the case of a private school, the body of persons sponsoring it.

The most common way of resolving this conflict of powers appears to be to **establish different levels for developing the curriculum**. The degree of detail at these levels is inversely proportionate to the size of the geographical or political unit in question. However, the need for qualifications to be recognised nationally makes a certain degree of detail necessary even at the highest level. This at least is demonstrated by trends in reform. Countries which have a very open curriculum determined mainly by local bodies are tending to establish at least a common-core curriculum for the entire political territory of the state; while countries which are traditionally very centralised in this field are choosing to modifying this tendency, and only to offer broad outlines which are defined in greater detail at the lower levels of decision-making (region, municipality or school).

Spain and the United Kingdom are good examples of the above-mentioned dual trend. In Spain, a country with a traditionally centralised curriculum, the central authorities have, since the reform of 1990, laid down basic curricular guidelines which subsequently have to be defined in more detail at regional level or by the school itself. In England and Wales, a 'National Curriculum' has been introduced specifying the content and targets of attainment in a range of compulsory subjects which all pupils must have reached over the period of compulsory education.

However, in contrast to these examples, we can find other intermediate cases. In Belgium, following the recent constitutional reform, the State has retained its power to establish minimum criteria for the award of qualifications, but it has endowed the various Communities with full powers to set the curriculum, based on cultural, and above all, linguistic differences. In Luxembourg, the aim of introducing school projects is for each secondary school to adapt national objectives and programmes in accordance with its own specific characteristics, taking into consideration the cultural diversity of its pupils. This is of special importance for two reasons: firstly, due to the fact that Luxembourg has three national languages; and secondly, it is a country which is the seat of many international institutions, and it has a large population of foreign workers, leading to great cultural diversity amongst its pupils. Greece, Italy, Finland and Iceland are also following this trend towards decentralisation: each school has a certain flexibility to adapt the national curriculum to its local situation.

Countries which have not introduced reforms of this type already had a division of responsibilities for defining the curriculum which is very much in line with this blend between minimum specification at the highest administrative level and successive definition of detail by administrative bodies of lesser geographical or political scope or by the schools themselves. Cases worthy of note are Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Scotland and Norway.

Another key aspect of decentralised school management is to ascertain who is responsible for decision-making in relation to the appointment of **teaching and non-teaching staff** in the schools. In France, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Norway, it is the central authorities which are responsible for the selection of teachers for recruitment to the civil service and for their allocation to public sector schools; in Greece, the central authorities are responsible for the allocation of teachers on the basis of a list on which the new graduates register each year. This situation has not changed over recent years in these countries. This was also the situation in Spain before the approval of its new constitution; now it is the Autonomous Communities which appoint teachers. In Iceland, [4] it is the Ministry which takes decisions regarding the recruitment of teachers on the recommendation of the headteacher and the school board *(Skólanefnd)*. The ministry is responsible for the selection of headteachers. The situation is similar to that in Germany, where it is the education authorities of the *Länder* which are responsible for the appointment of teaching staff. In Sweden, in 1989, the responsibility for employing teaching staff was transferred to the local authorities. There is a similar situation in Finland (since June 1988). An extreme example of decentralisation is the United Kingdom (England and Wales), where it is the school and college governing bodies which decide on the appointment of teachers. This trend towards decentralisation has also affected other aspects of personnel management. Nevertheless, the range of decision-making powers which schools have in this respect is still minimal.

The introduction of decentralising measures into a centralised system, or their simple application in a decentralised system, have in many cases been accompanied by a general trend towards the **evaluation, inspection or supervision** of these education systems as a whole and of each of their components.

The end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s saw the emergence of a growing, clear and widespread interest in developing a systematic and formal evaluation of the education system as a whole, of the teaching staff and of the curriculum. In most countries, legislation was introduced to include this new emphasis on evaluation either alone or amongst other provisions. These laws expressly state that the aim of the evaluation must be to continually match the education system to social and educational requirements. Evaluation has become a key element for controlling and improving the quality of education; its scope of application is being extended to pupils, teaching staff, schools, educational processes (content, curricula, types of training, methods, means, results, etc.) and at all levels of the administration itself. Setting into motion this trend for the evaluation of the entire education system required the introduction of a series of institutional reforms, either to create new bodies explicitly charged with this task (Spain, France and Luxembourg), or to restructure organisations which had previously been performing other types of inspection and evaluation tasks and adapt them to this new function.

As described in further detail in the section on Evaluation and Inspection, there is a tendency to progressively decentralise the supervisory and inspection functions of the various elements which make up the system.

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[4] From 1 June 1996, responsibility for teacher recruitment has been transferred to the local authorities.

Although the final heading in this section contains a description of the trends in **educational funding and the administration of financial resources**, it might also be said that we are witnessing a decentralisation of decision-making with respect to the control and management of public expenditure, in other words, decision-making on the funding to be allocated to each body or organisation with responsibilities for education. In spite of this, fundamental financial responsibility continues to devolve upon the state authorities, in relation to both the management of income and the determination of the amount of funding allocated to education.

During the past few years we have also been witnessing greater social concern for education, which is taken into account by the various governments and translated into a quantitative and qualitative increase in channels for **society to participate in decision-making** at every level. Many countries have created advisory and decision-making bodies which include representatives of the sectors of the educational community at central, regional and local level, and within the school itself.[5]

By way of example, we can briefly cite the creation of the *Consejo Escolar* of the State and the *Consejo Escolar* in each of the Autonomous Communities (Schools Councils at national and Community levels) in Spain and the *Autonome Raad van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs* (ARGO - Independent Council for Education) of the Flemish Community of Belgium. These institutions have the task of organising, administering and managing education and comprise representatives of the various parties concerned - parents, managers and teachers.

3.2. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

In parallel with the political and educational decentralisation which has been taking place over recent years in EU Member States and EFTA countries, the independence of schools in administration, management and organisation has been growing, as has the participation of the different sectors of the educational community in decision making.

As regards the **independence of schools**, most countries seem tempted to delegate a greater number of management responsibilities and tasks to schools, which in some cases is known as school-based management or local management of schools. In concrete terms, most education systems have in recent years introduced more or less radical measures which are destined to increase the decision-making autonomy of schools. At least this would appear to be the case in the Flemish Community of Belgium, where there is greater autonomy in relation to expenditure, grants and parent participation; in Denmark, following the new Act on the *folkeskole* passed in 1989; in Spain, following the passing of the LODE *(Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación* - basic law regulating the right to education) in 1985; in France, following the education law *(Loi d'orientation)* in 1989; and in Italy, following the new system of school management introduced in 1993 but not yet implemented. In Austria, school autonomy was introduced in an amendment to the School Organisation Act in 1993. Mention should also be made of the Decree-Law of 1991 in Portugal, still in its pilot phase, of the Education Reform Act 1988 in England and Wales and the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (in Northern Ireland), which established the system of Local Management of Schools (LMS), and also of the 1988 and 1992 reforms in Scotland which will be fully implemented by 1997. In Finland, school autonomy was increased by the introduction of the 'lesson hour quota system' when the 1985 law on compulsory education came into force and by an extension of the decision-making powers of the municipalities in relation to financial matters, under the 1992 law on the financing of education and culture.

In general terms, the reforms tend to establish a system of educational administration in which schools play an essential role in decision-making. The result is that now a series of questions on important aspects such as the curriculum, staffing or the budget are submitted to the educational community in each school for an opinion or even for decision. This new system breaks with the tradition under which a central or local bureaucracy dominated the decision-making process.

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[5] For greater detail, see *Consultative Councils and Other Forms of Social Participation in Education in the European Union*, *EURYDICE, 1996.*

However, it must be said that the increased autonomy of management of schools does not present a common or homogeneous trend in all countries. There are great differences between the points of departure of the various countries concerned. That is to say, the decision-making powers which schools enjoyed prior to the reforms varied greatly, and this in good measure determines the scope of the changes introduced by moves towards decentralisation.

On the other hand, there are significant differences in the decision-making powers of schools, depending on the specific circumstances of the school situation. In this sense, perhaps we are observing greater independence for schools today than a few years ago, at least in areas such as the curriculum, discipline, extra-curricular activities, relations with the local community, or even financial aspects (although here we must take into account the whole range of gradations, from approving the budget to actually controlling funds). This trend is not found in all areas. For instance, decisions on staffing always come under a 'specialised' or 'technical' body. These differences which can be seen at the school level may be a reflection of the tension between centralisation and decentralisation which is observed at the higher levels of the national educational administration.

This trend of increased independence for schools has been accompanied by a parallel increase in the **participation** of the educational community in school management. Most countries have school governing bodies or consultative bodies in which various sectors of the educational community are represented. Most of the EU systems introduced collegiate governing bodies in schools in the early 1980s, with the result that the reforms carried out during this decade have resulted in particular in a gradual reinforcement of their powers.

Within this general trend we also find similarities between countries with respect to the membership of school councils. In all cases, councils include teachers' and parents' representatives, and at secondary school level most also include pupil representatives (except in the Flemish and German Communities of Belgium, Ireland, United Kingdom and Iceland). There is also frequently some form of representation of local government (a tendency common to many countries) and, in some countries, of non-teaching staff (French Community in Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Finland and Norway). The differences in this field may include in particular the fact that some countries have also introduced representatives from the economic and cultural sectors even at the level of compulsory education (Flemish Community of Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Portugal, and the United Kingdom). This is noteworthy not so much for the actual numbers of such representatives on the councils as for their very existence in countries in which the reforms are often recent.

The composition of school councils is in most cases intended to represent a balance of power between representatives of the staff, parents and the education administration, to ensure that none of the sectors is in a majority. Nevertheless in Denmark and Scotland, the parents have a clear majority over other members of the school council. In Sweden, pupils' right to influence the design and content of their education is regulated by law. Most of the local authorities also have some sort of body, in which parents participate.[6]

On the other hand, the scope of the school councils' tasks and responsibilities extends from the purely consultative to the executive. For example, in Denmark, the *skolebestyrelse* of the *folkeskole* has decision-making powers on the principles for the school's activities and it approves the school's budget; in England and Wales, *governing bodies* have decision-making powers over the management of budgets and all staff, including the headteacher, while in Scotland the *School Board* has a consultative role in the selection of the headteacher. In another group of countries (Spain, with the *Consejo escolar*, and Portugal, with the *Conselho de Escola)* councils have the power to choose the headteacher. Nevertheless, the more common situation is for councils to be limited to relations between the school and the community or extra-curricular activities, and only rarely to extend to financial, staffing and educational aspects.

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[6] For greater detail, see *The Role of Parents in the Education Systems of the Member States of the European Union*, EURYDICE, 1997 and *School Heads in the European Union*, EURYDICE, 1996.

Thus it is clear that there is a close relationship between decentralisation, democracy and participation. The efforts which have been made by all EU and EFTA/EEA countries to satisfy the demand for democratic management of schools are widely acknowledged. Fundamentally, these efforts have been directed towards fostering the participation of teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils (and in some cases social groups such as residents' associations and trade unions) in a school council.

School autonomy and the participation of the educational community in school management depend largely on the **administration**. Greater independence for schools in taking decisions of a curricular, administrative and financial nature is possible where the administration is better prepared to cope with new tasks. On the other hand, increased social participation in the running of schools requires collegiate decision-making by the members of the educational community, which cannot but influence the hierarchical structure.

The above-mentioned trends indicate a certain development in the administrative structures in place in most schools. Thus a large number of European Union countries have in recent years introduced modifications in this field. It can be said that the debate on the management of schools centres on two issues: on the one hand, more efficient management, which depends on greater specialisation on the part of the headteacher in order to meet the demands of the growing independence of schools and, on the other hand, more democratic management, in which the different sectors of the educational community are involved in the decisions which are taken.

In trying to identify one model of headteacher chosen by all the countries and towards which the changes recently introduced are tending, we obtain a mixed picture. On the one hand, we note opposition in the current debate between those who support a head invested with wide-ranging powers which make it possible to manage the school's independence properly and those who support more limited powers for the headteacher, leaving more responsibility for school management with the school community, represented in the main by the school council.

Analysis of the situation in the various countries reveals less clear trends than on other points. We can however conclude that school heads - most of the time in cooperation with the management bodies - are generally given more power in order to tackle new responsibilities. This trend appears in the Flemish Community of Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Finland, Sweden and England and Wales. Thus, for example, in Denmark, the school head has been responsible since 1990 for all decisions affecting individual pupils and - with the *skolebestyrelse* (management body) - for controlling and allocating the tasks of all staff. Nevertheless, in some countries there has been a contrary trend, as for example in Spain, where, since 1985, the powers of the school head have been curtailed, turning the school council into the school's top decision-making body.

On the other hand, management varies between specialisation and democratisation. The first option tends to make the school head a management professional, equipped with specific training and selected from outwith the teaching body, while in the second it is a teacher, chosen by the school community, who deals with the administration of the school.

The options taken by each country, according to this point of view, are not identical in nature. Thus, whilst in Spain and Portugal the educational community (essentially composed of teachers, pupils and parents)[7] elects the school head, in other countries the local or regional authorities continue to appoint management professionals as school heads. Again, Spain turns out to be a clear case favouring the participative option: during the decade in question, the school head has been elected by the School Council from among the teachers in the school for a limited term of office. A typical example of the opposite trend is France, where since 1988 specialised staff with a special status have been recruited to posts as school heads.

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[7] See membership of the *Consejo escolar del centro* and of the *Conselho de escola* in *Consultative Councils and Other Forms of Social Participation in Education in the European Union*, Eurydice, 1996.

Another trend worth drawing attention to is the introduction of business methods into school management. As a result of the process of decentralisation and independence of schools, some countries consider that schools bear a certain resemblance to business concerns whose heads need to possess a broad range of technical, leadership and human relations skills (Italy, the Netherlands, England and Wales, and, to a certain extent, the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium, and Finland).

3.3. FUNDING

During the past decade, changes in parallel with administrative decentralisation have been instituted in the processes of financing education systems. This involves a broader distribution of powers for controlling and managing public-sector expenditure. That is to say, decisions on handling the funds allocated to each body or organisation with responsibilities for education are being decentralised. Thus, regional communities with education powers (the Belgian Communities and certain Spanish Autonomous Communities) are able to determine their own procedures for education funding. Normally, local administrations co-operate in funding schools (paying the cost of installations, operations and equipment, various services and some complementary activities for public state-run schools, as well as funding schools owned by the local administrations themselves). England and Wales are an exception to this rule, since each LEA (Local Education Authority) plays a very important role in determining the level of education expenditure in its area. Under local management of schools legislation, over 85% of the school's budget is devolved to individual school governing bodies which are wholly responsible for the management of the school's financial, staffing and material resources, in accordance with their own priorities, within the framework of the National Curriculum and other legislation. Another exception is Germany, where the public-sector schools of the *Länder* are run by the local authorities *(Gemeinden)* which are responsible for their establishment, organisation and administration as well as their financing.

The countries which have embarked on the most far-reaching reforms in decentralising economic aspects and funding are Spain, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland and Sweden. In Spain, reforms have led to the Autonomous Communities with education powers carrying most of the responsibility for managing educational funds and to teaching institutions being given a certain degree of economic independence. In France, the decentralisation laws have given *départements* and regions the necessary powers to finance the capital and revenue expenditure of both *collèges* and *lycées,* and in Iceland the law on the division of responsibilities (1989) between the state and the local authorities has a similar function. In Finland and Sweden, municipalities have increased decision-making powers in financial matters. In the Netherlands, a new system for funding buildings and teaching materials and maintaining primary and special schools has been introduced, known as the *Londo* system. Under this *Londo* system, the school boards receive a fixed budget determined by the central government.

Nevertheless, as far as finance is concerned, the main responsibility continues to fall on the public authorities, comprising for this purpose the government, the central administrations or the Community administrations (Belgium and Spain) or the *Länder* (Germany), the regions and *départements.* These authorities are responsible both for the management of budget funding and for allocating the basic amount of funding to be devoted to education (educational transfers). It would appear that the economic role of the state in supporting education continues to be decisive. Its financial contribution is indispensable since compulsory schooling is governed by the fundamental principles of being both universal and free, which entail substantial economic obligations for the state administrations responsible for providing and maintaining education.

4. CURRICULUM

In one way or another, all of the countries analysed in this study have modified their compulsory education curriculum during the ten years under review. This type of reform is interesting in that, from analysis of it, it is possible to anticipate future trends in European education. The curriculum is one of the major factors determining teaching activities.

In some countries, curricular reforms are the logical consequence of the structural reforms affecting all or part of compulsory education. Examples of this are, on the one hand, Spain and Portugal, both of which having made comprehensive changes in the structures of their education systems and, on the other hand, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, with less wide-ranging reforms. The structural reforms embarked upon by all of these countries have necessarily been accompanied by curricular reforms.

- In Spain, the 1990 Law reforming the entire structure of the education system at all non-university levels and prolonging compulsory schooling up to the age of 16, was followed by successive decrees for the various levels of education in which curricula were modified in order to adjust them to the new structure.
- In the case of Portugal, the 1986 basic law for the reform of the education system *(Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo)* which prolonged compulsory education and involved a total restructuring of the levels of education, was followed by Decree-Law 268 of 1989, which defined the way the new curriculum was organised in each stage of basic education and the guidelines which govern the new curricula.
- In Belgium, the extension of compulsory schooling on a part-time basis to the age of 18 in 1983 demanded a readjustment of the curricula throughout the entire period of compulsory education. Subsequently, in the Flemish Community, the unification in 1989 of the two types of secondary education which had hitherto existed made it necessary to establish a new framework for secondary education, which also entailed an overhaul of the curriculum.
- In Germany, in most of the *Länder*, a new type of school - the *Gesamtschule* - was introduced at lower secondary level parallel to the traditional tripartite system *(Hauptschule, Realschule* and *Gymnasium).* The *Gesamtschule* provides several branches of education at the same time. After the reunification of Germany in 1990, one of the Federal Republic's education policy priorities was the establishment of a common and comparable basic structure in the school system. The new *Länder* introduced the legislative framework needed for the education reforms. The traditional types of school have been developed in the new *Länder* on a legal foundation. As a complement, new schools combining *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* education have appeared.
- In Luxembourg, the extension of compulsory schooling by one year and reforms in secondary education demanded successive changes to the curriculum. Thus, in 1984, vocational training disappeared from the first three years of the first cycle of secondary technical education. In 1989, a new curriculum was introduced in primary education, while curricular changes were also made in general and technical secondary education in 1990.
- In the Netherlands, the introduction of the law on primary education (WBO) in 1985, which unified nursery school education for 4- to 6-year-olds and primary school education for 6- to 12-year-olds in *basisonderwijs* (basic education), was both a reform of the curriculum and a major change of the level of the education system. The introduction, however, of *basisvorming* in lower secondary education was only a revision of the curriculum within the existing school types.

However, even in countries where there have been no structural reforms in the education systems, modifications were introduced into the various curricula during the decade covered by this study. Countries such as Germany, Greece, France, Italy, Austria, Finland, the United Kingdom and Iceland also introduced curricular reforms as a consequence of new thinking regarding the method of organising compulsory education.[8]

Germany has established new framework curricula for vocational schools (since the beginning of the 1980s) and, furthermore, several recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs have established various curricular changes in compulsory education. In Greece, the basic law approved in 1985 affecting primary and secondary education emphasised the need to modernise the curricula. France, for its part, approved new curricula for primary schools and lower secondary schools *(collèges)* in 1985, and in 1992 it set in motion an educational renewal plan for the *lycées* (upper secondary schools), the first year of which is part of compulsory education. Furthermore, the new organisation of education into stages, applicable as from 1992 to primary education, also prompted a re-evaluation of curricula. In Italy, in 1985, new curricula were approved for primary education. In Finland, the curriculum was revised in accordance with the law of 1983 and the curricular guidelines of 1985. The reforms resulted in the abolition of syllabi differing in scope for children at different levels of achievement in the upper stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola*. Finally, in the United Kingdom, mention should be made of the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales, established by the Education Reform Act 1988, the Northern Ireland Curriculum, introduced by the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, and also the new Scottish curricular programme of 1991, known as the 5-14 Development Plan for pupils between these ages.

In order to ascertain accurately the true scope of these reforms, various aspects of curriculum development are analysed below: planning, content, organisation, methodologies applied and, finally, assessment.

4.1. PLANNING

The trend towards decentralisation of responsibilities for defining the curriculum in detail is mentioned in the previous chapter. There is a move in all schools towards a minimum common curriculum, established by the central authorities, which is then defined in greater depth at lower levels of decision-making, the final one being the school. England, Wales and Northern Ireland, are the exception as autonomy in matters of the curriculum there has passed from schools and local government authorities to central government.

As has already been mentioned, each school has its own special characteristics which make it necessary for the curriculum to be adapted to the specific nature of each school. Moreover, we are observing a trend for the curriculum to be seen as an open and flexible element which must serve the needs of those at whom it is targeted. This requires final decisions on the curriculum to take into account the pupils in question. There are fundamentally two arguments which support these ideas regarding curricula. On the one hand, each pupil may have clearly defined interests or very different abilities making him or her more skilled in specific areas of learning which, in turn, requires the curriculum to be individualised. In support of this argument, we find the entire tradition of that school of thought which maintains that education must above all be centred on the pupil. Furthermore, a growing phenomenon in Europe today is the presence of pupils with different mother tongues or from diverse cultures together in the same school. There are two major reasons for this phenomenon: on the one hand, the free movement of people within the European Union and the creation of European citizenship in the Treaty of Maastricht; on the other, the migratory influx of people from less developed countries towards European countries in search of opportunities to improve their living standards. Such growing intercultural aspects in school life represent a new challenge and make curriculum planning even more complex.

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[8] Since the end of 1995, Denmark has new guidelines on the *folkeskole* curriculum.
In Sweden, the division of the *grundskola* (compulsory school) into three levels was abolished in 1995. Instead, there will be a new curriculum defining the total number of hours for the nine years of the *grundskola* (6,665 hours). The new curriculum places emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge, norms and values.

Thus, the majority of countries are faced with the problem of specifying the kind of core curriculum which should be established by the central bodies. What percentage of the overall course load must it cover? What subjects must it include? What should be the load for each subject? These are some of the questions which might help to position the main issues in the controversy. To cite one example, one of the most heated debates on this issue has emerged in England and Wales, generating a wealth of literature in the form of institutional working documents and reports. The controversy is understandable in this case if one considers that England and Wales have had one of the greatest traditions of freedom for schools to set the curriculum, and where consequently the standardisation introduced by the National Curriculum represented a very significant change.

4.2. CONTENT

Of the issues raised in the previous section, it is perhaps the one concerning the specific content of the minimum core curriculum which provides one of the clearest keys to comparative interpretation.

In western societies, it is a very complex task to determine this specific core curriculum. On the one hand, this is because free market principles are resulting in large sections of their populations becoming unemployed and making it difficult for young people to find jobs. As a result, people are pointing to the education systems, which are blamed for their inability to tailor the training of pupils to society's employment needs. On the other hand, because of the accelerated development of knowledge, there is ever more content to be included in the school syllabus, and finally, because society is demanding that the school as an institution should fulfil an increasing number of functions, not only in order to impart a specific amount of knowledge but also to provide total training, as can be seen in the section on aims.

Thus it would appear that the minimum curriculum must enable pupils to acquire 'basic key skills', but the problem is how to define which basic skills are essential to young people's positive development within complex contemporary societies. Apart from the skills traditionally considered to be basic and elementary, there are various reasons nowadays which make it essential to extend the range of what is understood as basic skills. It is no longer enough to refer to only reading, writing and arithmetic; to these must be added a knowledge of the new forms of communication and access to information, a knowledge of foreign languages, etc. Constantly accelerating advances in knowledge make it essential for schools to provide the foundations for pupils to learn subsequently by themselves in the fields which interest them. It is impossible to teach 'everything' in a world in which the increase in knowledge and information is exponential. Furthermore, an increasingly competitive world combined with great employment flexibility requires people who are more capable of doing different types of task and more adaptable.

This is achieved by securing elementary instrumental skills which will subsequently permit the acquisition of knowledge in diverse fields.

Finally, the inter-relationships which characterise the modern world demand citizens who are well trained in basic skills beyond those of reading and writing (without which a person is 'functionally illiterate'), such as techniques for handling large databases and computerised documentation networks.

As a result of this redefinition of what basic skills must include, **several subjects** have received greater emphasis in the curricular reforms of the various countries.

1. The linguistic interdependency of Europe as a result of its gradual process of integration in the economic, social and political fields makes foreign language learning not only necessary, but vital. The introduction of the study of one **foreign language** in the compulsory education curriculum has already become widespread. In those countries

where such foreign language learning already existed, the age when children start to be taught their first foreign language has been brought forward. Furthermore, some countries are beginning to introduce the teaching of a second foreign language.

In Denmark, for example, the teaching of English was introduced from the fourth year of the *folkeskole* in 1994. In most of the *Länder* in Germany, *Grundschulen* (6- to 10-year-olds) have also been offering a foreign language as an option for two or three periods per week since 1985. English is most common, but in some *Länder* French is offered. Compulsory foreign language teaching usually begins at the lower secondary level (with 10-year-olds). In schools in Greece, the study of foreign languages has been introduced in primary and lower secondary levels, and languages have been taught by specialised teachers as from the 1993/94 academic year. In 1990, Spain brought forward by three years the compulsory inclusion of a foreign language in the curriculum and is offering a second language as an option as from the first year of compulsory secondary education. Since 1989, France has included a foreign language on an experimental basis during the final two years of primary school. Since the 1992/93 academic year, the curriculum in Italy has included a compulsory foreign language (English, French, German, or Spanish) in primary education. In Austria, a foreign language has been taught in the third and fourth years of primary school. There are also school projects running with foreign language teaching beginning in the first year. In the Netherlands, English has been compulsory in the last two years of primary school since 1986. In Finland, a general national plan for language learning was introduced in 1984 so as to increase the choice of languages. The municipalities base their curricula on this national plan. Since 1993, in addition to the mother tongue (Finnish or Swedish), one language is obligatory at the lower stage of *Peruskoulu* (years 1 to 6), and another is optional. At the upper stage of *Peruskoulu* (years 7 to 9), two languages are obligatory, one of them being the second domestic language (Swedish or Finnish as the case may be), and the other a foreign language. In addition to this, pupils can take more languages as optional or elective subjects. In the United Kingdom, the study of a modern language has been compulsory for pupils aged 11 and over in England and Wales since 1988 and in Northern Ireland since 1989. In Scotland, since 1994, all pupils have had to learn a foreign language from the age of 10.[9]

In some countries, pupils are allowed to choose the foreign language they wish to study and are limited only by what the schools themselves offer. In other countries, specific languages are established in advance amongst which a choice must be made on a compulsory basis.

Special mention should be made of those countries whose multilingualism means that more than one language is taught at the same level. Such is the case, for example, in Belgium (Brussels-Capital Region) and Luxembourg, which are special in that schools have always been concerned to offer a multilingual education.

2. Although the importance accorded to foreign language learning is great, in those European countries which are multilingual, no less importance is accorded to learning **all the national languages**, which indicates an express acknowledgement of the cultural wealth that multilingualism represents. Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Ireland, Finland, and Wales and Scotland in the United Kingdom are typical examples. In these countries, the inclusion in schools of mother tongue teaching is an essential element in those areas where that language differs from the predominant language of the state.

3. The growth in information also requires the inclusion of subjects associated with the **new technologies for processing, storing and retrieving information**. This has affected all the Member States in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries. The use of computers has rapidly spread throughout schools, which would appear logical if one considers the infinite possibilities of these new media with respect to advances in human knowledge. Communication networks and the greater interactive potential of new computer programmes make the computer into a tool that is without doubt fundamental

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[9] In Sweden, in the new timetable for the *grundskola* which came into force in 1995, more time is allocated to second language courses. Local or individual options may also include a third foreign language.

to allowing the rising generation to acquire knowledge and process information. In the not too distant future, this will necessarily require a radical overhaul of teaching aids in schools as well as of teaching methodologies themselves. In Iceland, since 1986, emphasis has been placed on national and international telecommunication between schools at compulsory level. Since 1992, some 90 % of Icelandic schools at this level have been connected to the Internet.

4. The complexity of contemporary societies, on which numerous factors act interdependently, makes it necessary for schools to provide valid criteria for the interpretation of social phenomena which might otherwise escape the comprehension of young people who are being bombarded with information that is at times fragmented and lacks interpretation on the part of the communication media. This is especially true of the audio-visual media which are those most young people are in touch with. One of the principal aims of the widespread introduction in many countries of **cross-disciplinary themes and subject areas relating to the analysis of current problems** is to establish rules for the general interpretation of such phenomena. Associated with these we find subjects of knowledge relating to **civic and social behaviour**. In a society where traditional values appear to be crumbling, and until new values capable of replacing them emerge with the same force and depth, education systems are endeavouring to provide new values which offer young people rules for ethical behaviour presented in a rational manner.

A number of countries followed this trend between 1984 and 1994. Germany has since 1986 encouraged an emphasis on themes related to the environment and health in various subjects, as has Scotland since 1991. Greece (in 1991 for the primary level and 1990 for the secondary level) and Ireland (1989) have introduced Environmental Education at primary level; Spain has included cross-curricular themes (including Moral and Civic Education and Equal Opportunities) since 1990; France has re-established Civic Education as a core subject since 1985; and the Netherlands has been offering Religious and Ideological Movements as a subject in primary schools since 1985. Portugal has been providing curricular *desenvolvimento pessoal e social* (Personal and Social Education), the content of which ranges from environmental education to accident-prevention, on a pilot basis since 1991/92. In Finland, the curriculum has since 1985 been placing emphasis on national culture and international cooperation, equality of the sexes and environmental protection. In addition, ethics has been introduced as a compulsory subject. England and Wales have included Environmental Education, Multicultural Education and Personal and Social Education in the National Curriculum since 1988. In Iceland, the study of topics such as environmental education, equality of opportunity and addiction prevention has been encouraged since 1989. Finally, the curriculum in Norway has included practical, social and cultural activities since 1987.

It is also necessary to highlight the efforts which the various countries are making to introduce the **European dimension** into education. In all of these countries, this dimension has been accepted as an integral part of the school curriculum and of teacher training courses (Brock and Tulasiewicz, 1994). This might be a reflection of the implementation of provisions in the Union's education policy which have been introduced since the first action programme in the field of education was outlined in 1976. Article IV, para.5, sub-paragraph 1 of this programme recommended giving 'a European dimension to the experience of teachers and pupils in primary and secondary schools in the Community'.[10] Subsequently, the Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council on the European dimension in education of 24 May 1988 considered the introduction of the European dimension into education to be a key factor for the development of European integration, as it should help to 'strengthen in

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[10] Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers for Education meeting within the Council of 9 February 1976 comprising an action programme in the field of education.

> young people a sense of European identity and make clear to them the value of European civilisation and of the foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their development today, that is in particular the safeguarding of the principles of democracy, social justice and respect for human rights.'[11]
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> In most countries, this effort to introduce a European dimension into education is not explicit in their curricular reforms, but it may be implicitly observed if one analyses the policies guiding them. One example is the greater attention given to learning European languages. The same is true of the review of history syllabi in order to ensure a more European approach to issues. This European approach will make it easier for rivalries between European countries, without denying their existence as historical facts, not to be seen today as insuperable obstacles to the intercultural understanding of peoples which have shaped not only the 'Old Continent' but also the 'New Europe' of the twenty-first century.
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> Germany is a good example of a country where this intention is made explicit. In its recommendation *Europa im Unterricht* (Europe in the Classroom) of December 1990, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Culture sought to define what schools' 'European' duty should consist of. It aims to make young people aware of the importance of the processes of integration which are taking place within the Union and, in the final analysis, to help to consolidate a sense of European identity.

Alongside these emerging curricular subjects, mention should be made of the subjects within the compulsory education curriculum which remain heavily emphasised in all countries. They are studied throughout almost all the years covered by compulsory education and an exceptional number of hours are dedicated to them. Two of these are found to be of special relevance: mathematics and the official language of the state (or languages, in those regions which have more than one). Both continue to be considered as the cornerstone upon which all subsequent education will be built, a basic instrumental acquisition without which it is impossible to advance to further learning.

Another curricular reform which affects the content is the greater emphasis placed on **acquiring thinking strategies and intellectual tools** to facilitate new forms of learning in the future. The curriculum is not now considered simply as the body of teaching which must be imparted in schools in order for society to perpetuate its linguistic, cultural and historical heritage and its system of values in the coming generations. This is why much particular attention is given to instrumental aspects, to elements which may serve as future tools for the independent and critical acquisition of new knowledge or even for adopting a creative attitude to the development of such knowledge. Acquiring attitudes and mastering skills are valued more than the mere stockpiling of facts and figures.

Thus, a great many countries explicitly state that in compulsory education, in addition to basic cultural content, it is fundamental to the proper development of children to provide them with the means to deploy their intellectual skills. A very clear example is the 1989 Luxembourg curriculum which states that 'although it is certain that elementary cultural techniques such as reading, writing and arithmetic do constitute essential skills, the development of thinking strategies, the ability to resolve problems and communication techniques are as, if not more, important.'[12] Similarly, since 1986, Portugal includes among the objectives it has established for basic education: facilitating the acquisition and development of methods and tools for individual and group working. Similarly, other countries, such as Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Finland [13] have between 1984 and 1994 also introduced into their new curricula the acquisition of learning strategies which go beyond pure subject material.

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[11] Objective I.1 (based on the Copenhagen Declaration of April 1978).

[12] See part II, section concerning the curriculum in the report sent by Luxembourg. (Section 4, Curriculum).

[13] Sweden also introduced these learning strategies into its new curriculum in 1995.

4.3. ORGANISATION

In curricular reform there seems to be a tendency to organise the various levels of the curriculum in the form of **broad subject areas** rather than specific subjects with clearly defined limits, in line with the concept of an open and flexible basic minimum curriculum that is made more specific as it goes down through the successive administrative bodies. Furthermore, this method of organising the curriculum also remains true to the idea that the curriculum must include not only the subjects to be taught but also the acquisition of intellectual skills and thinking strategies. Consequently, when it comes to designing curricula, reference is made to subject areas involving broad fields of knowledge, such as Language, Science, Artistic Expression, Humanities, etc.

The new curricula which have been introduced in primary schools in France in 1985 illustrate this point.[14] These are organised around various fairly broad basic subjects: French, Mathematics, Sciences and Technology, History and Geography, Physical Education and Sports, and Artistic Education. The primary school programme proposed in Italy, also from 1985, includes broad areas such as Sciences, History, Geography and Social Sciences, and Motor Skills. The new curricular guidelines in Scotland since 1991 for pupils from 5 to 14 years old, known as the '5-14 Development Plan', are another example. In these guidelines, subjects are organised into five broad areas: Language, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts, and Religious and Moral Studies. Other countries, such as Spain, Luxembourg and Portugal, are following the same trend.

Another widespread feature is the increasingly flexible organisation of the time granted to pupils in order to achieve the proposed curricular objectives. The decision to **structure the curriculum into stages (cycles)** rather than into academic years is being extended. This implies a more holistic approach to education and offers pupils more time in which to achieve the objectives, whilst at the same time easing the burden of assessment tasks to check whether or not the objectives have been attained. Many countries had already organised education in stages, and their reforms served to reinforce this. Others, by contrast, have only recently espoused this approach. The Portuguese structural reform, with its new organisation of 'basic education' in 'cycles', is the clearest example of this more recent direction. However, the cases of the French Community of Belgium, Spain and France, which made it explicit in its 1989 Act *(Loi d'orientation sur l'éducation)* which was put into effect generally in 1992, also illustrate this point.

Research has also confirmed that the **principle** of a **common core curriculum,** understood to mean the need to offer a common education throughout compulsory education, is the principle of choice in most European countries at primary education level. Those countries which already had this in their education systems seem to be either reaffirming it or even extending the principle into secondary education. Countries which had more diversified educational structures hitherto seem to be tending to apply this principle. The common core curriculum is to some extent related to the structuring of education in stages and broad areas of knowledge, rather than in academic years during which narrow subjects have to be covered.

4.4. METHODOLOGIES

Following a long tradition which originated in the Nordic countries, the methodology most commonly found in the various curricula is that **centred on the pupil**. Methodological questions have transferred attention away from course content towards pupils' interests. Special importance is accorded to pupils' participation in their own learning, as well as to cooperation and team-working as an enriching and desirable foundation to the educational processes applied in school. In this respect, most countries are endeavouring to increase their resources so as to provide effectively individualised education which takes account of diversity.

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[14] This remark applies equally to the new curricula of 1995.

The Latin or Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Spain, France and Italy have also adopted this approach. Italy and Greece, for example, have stressed the evaluation of individual abilities. In France explicit mention is made of catering for the diversity of pupils and their varied educational profiles. And Spain has increased its human and material resources in order to offer individualised education and take account of diversity.

Finally, the **learning through discovery and constructivism**[15] theories appear to be considered the most appropriate reference models for guiding the methodological process of teaching/learning in schools in Europe.

4.5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment emerges as another of the main issues in the debate on reforms. It is intimately related to the manner in which the curriculum is conceived. The way the curriculum is established will depend on the form of assessment and vice versa. As a result of this debate and a consequence of structural reforms to education systems, or simply owing to reforms in educational objectives and content, many countries have made modifications to their assessment systems over the decade. This is the case in Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Finland, the United Kingdom, Iceland and Norway.

The direction taken by reforms allows us to conclude that **formative and criterion-based assessment** is preferred to summative or normative systems of assessment. As far as the levels of compulsory education are concerned, **assessment is becoming an instrument for guiding the learning process**, rather than a criterion of selection. Some critics claim that this change in conception is leading to a gradual decline in academic performance and that the result is to produce successive generations which are increasingly poorly prepared in terms of their basic education. However, there is no doubt that compulsory education for all, in an education system which operates according to the principle of a common core, leads to the consideration that school as an institution must not assess negatively those whom it obliges to be there without offering them adequate alternatives. Various examples of these trends exist. Spain, France and Portugal, have all eliminated qualifying examinations for the transfer from primary to secondary education. In Finland, for example, normative assessment, based on comparing pupils with each other, was abolished and replaced by objective-based assessment (1985).

Likewise, there is a general tendency in the majority of countries towards **overall assessment**. Assessment in specific subjects is today being replaced by a broader evaluation of the major areas of knowledge referred to above. There is also a tendency to **assess skills and aptitude more than subject knowledge**, as in the French Community of Belgium.

Finally, it should be noted that the question of greater or lesser flexibility in the curriculum is related to the assessment processes, and the way in which these processes are carried out. Where the curriculum is in narrower terms, assessment is easier and the results are more easily compared. However, where the curriculum is fundamentally open, the determination of minimum elements for evaluation and comparison is more complex, and methods of assessment have therefore to be more general.

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[15] Constructivism is the theory of learning based on the interaction of subject and environment. According to this approach, developed by Jean Piaget (1896-1980), individual learning is not a result of conditioning but of the construction of mental activities through interaction with the environment.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The changes which have occurred in education systems undoubtedly affect teaching staff. This is primarily the case with the prolongation of compulsory schooling. The democratisation of education and the trend towards a common core curriculum have led to pupils of very varying abilities, and with attitudes towards school which can be very different, being together in the same classroom and oblige a single teacher to cater adequately for them all. Such an individualised approach requires teachers to know their pupils well in order to enable them to treat their diverse abilities properly. Furthermore, it requires constant adaptations to the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Given the trend towards multicultural societies in a Europe in which human mobility is increasing, teachers are sometimes confronted with classrooms in which pupils of different nationalities and mother tongues participate in the same process of learning, which complicates their teaching strategies.

Moreover, the emergence of new information and communication technologies, and unstoppable exponential advances in knowledge, demand that teachers constantly update their training in order to keep abreast of their own specialist fields. This is also introducing a revision of teaching techniques, in view of the enormous potential of these new technologies within the teaching and learning process.

Finally, the concept of education today not only as instruction but as the education of the whole person is introducing greater breadth and flexibility into the responsibilities of educators and obliging teachers to pay greater attention to the psychological and emotional development of their pupils. Furthermore, the assumption of administrative and management tasks brings with it the need to master new skills in the field of administration. The openness of the school to its environment, entailing greater participation of the educational community in the affairs of the school, requires teachers to learn new skills, in this case in social relations, in order to negotiate with parents and jointly resolve their children's educational problems.

All these phenomena affect teaching staff in various areas of the exercise of their profession: restructuring of the functions and conditions of access to the teaching profession, initial and in-service training, and working conditions.

In addition to the changes produced in education systems as a result of the reforms themselves, some modifications relating to teaching staff have resulted in a harmonisation of European models of qualification for entry to the teaching profession. Thus, several countries have carried out reforms in order to unify their previously disparate legislation on teachers.

5.1. ORGANISATION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

In Member States where there have been general changes in the education structures, there has also been a **restructuring of the teaching profession**. This is the case in Spain and Portugal, although the actual restructuring criteria were different in each country. Spain, for example, combined teachers of lower secondary education (compulsory level for 12- to 16-year-olds) and those of post-compulsory secondary education (16 to 18) into a single category: secondary school teachers. However, Portugal, for its part, has created teaching categories by area, in order to achieve more stable teaching teams, and has established a single teaching career, with ten scale points.

Other countries, although they have not carried out general structural modifications to their education systems, have introduced **changes as regards entry to the teaching profession**. This is the case, for example, with France, where teacher-training and entry to teaching have been unified, the profession has been reorganised with an acceleration of the initial stages of the teacher's career, and new possibilities for internal promotion and salary reviews have been introduced.

5.2. INITIAL TRAINING

Over the ten-year period covered by this study, several significant changes occurred in the field of initial training of teachers for compulsory education. There have been reviews almost everywhere of initial training for teachers in primary education. This has led many countries to set up new systems of initial training, and some have even created new institutions for providing such training. In France, for example, higher university institutions of teacher training *(I.U.F.M. - Instituts Universitaires pour la Formation des Maîtres)* were set up under the 1989 Act *(Loi d'orientation)*, in which nursery, primary and secondary school teachers now receive initial training. Luxembourg, with its 1983 Act, created the higher institution of studies and educational research *(Institut supérieur d'études et de recherches pédagogiques)* which is responsible for the initial training of teachers in pre-school and primary education. In 1984, the Netherlands regrouped the various initial training institutions into 66 teacher training colleges, providing training for the new-style primary education, *basisonderwijs.* (Pre-school and primary education has been integrated into a single structure for the age group 4 to 12 years.) And finally, in Sweden, a new integrated study programme was introduced in 1988.

Some countries have thus brought together in a single institution the training of teachers for the various levels of compulsory education. Some, such as France, have combined training for primary and secondary teachers. Others, like Luxembourg, Portugal and the Netherlands, have unified the training of pre-school and primary teachers. Although it has not created a specific new institution, Italy has decided that, following its 1990 law regulating universities *(Riforma degli ordenamenti didattici universitari)*, and without setting up new institutions, the initial training of both pre-school and primary teachers should be provided at the same level, that of the *Laurea.*

Analysis of the reforms introduced by the various countries in relation to the initial training of teachers for compulsory education shows a series of features common to all EU Member States and EFTA/EEA countries, which could be described as follows:

1. Initial teacher training for all levels of compulsory education has acquired the status of **higher education** in those countries in which that was not formerly the case (Italy,[16] Luxembourg and Portugal) or of **university education** where training already had the status of higher education (Greece, at nursery and primary level, France and Scotland).

2. The **duration of studies** required to complete initial training has been increased to a **minimum of three years** for primary education (and nursery education where it is part of compulsory education), following increases in Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Austria. In some countries studies extend beyond this minimum (four to six years in Italy - depending on each individual faculty - four years in Greece and Scotland, three-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years in Sweden).

3. **Teaching practice** is also a very important component of training and is included in all countries.

However, initial training reforms are not restricted to the establishment of new institutions or structural changes. Significant modifications in the field of curricula have also been embarked on. Apart from countries which have reformed their curricula as a consequence of the extension of schooling or the creation of new training institutions such as those mentioned above, we can cite as examples Denmark, which has adopted new initial teacher-training curricula, and Spain, where new courses have been introduced.

A feature common to these new curricula is the greater specialisation required of the teacher in a particular area. However, it also appears that, apart from the knowledge of the subjects which they are going to teach, teachers must be able to develop teaching strategies appropriate to a variety of contexts. Initial training therefore includes ever more closely supervised teaching practice, or a probationary period.

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[16] Although the law has been introduced it has not yet been brought into operation.

In brief, initial teacher training has adopted a three-point structure: a solid academic knowledge of the subject area, endorsed by a higher education qualification, a knowledge of the science of teaching, and teaching practice.

5.3. IN-SERVICE TRAINING [17]

Over the ten years covered by this study, most countries have placed strong emphasis on the **promotion of in-service training** for teachers. Various factors explain this. To the increasingly complex demands made on the teachers must be added the effect of falling birth-rates on the number of children of compulsory school age, which means that fewer teachers are needed and fewer newly-trained teachers need to be recruited. Optimum use must be made of the existing teaching complement as it is gradually ageing and therefore has to make a greater effort to keep up-to-date. Finally, the frequent innovations and reforms require an almost constant updating of training for teachers to enable them to adapt to the changes.

A clear consequence of this new impetus on continuing training can be seen in the **creation of new institutions and organisations especially devoted to co-ordinating further training for teachers**. In some countries, such as Spain, new institutions have been created to undertake this task, the *Centros de Profesores* (teachers' colleges) created in 1984. Greece is following the same trend with the institution in 1992 of the regional in-service training centres (PEK) which, together with the Pedagogical Institute and the universities, are responsible for the in-service training of teachers. In Portugal, a body with responsibility for the entire country was set up in 1992, for the accreditation of centres and training activities and the follow-up and assessment of the in-service training system for teachers. In Luxembourg, the Minister for Education established in 1993 a department for the coordination of educational and technological research and innovation (SCRIPT), whose remit includes inter alia the organisation of in-service training for teachers.

Some countries are creating specific legislative frameworks to improve co-ordination of in-service training activities. These activities are regulated, more rationally organised and better geared to the training requirements of teachers themselves and of the educational community in general (Belgium). Other countries, such as Italy, are establishing programmes of refresher training covering several years.

Another example of this approach is that some countries are linking institutions responsible for in-service training to universities. This is the case in Belgium (Flemish Community), Spain, Portugal, Finland and Sweden. In these cases, it is usual to opt for faculties, departments or institutes which have a strong connection with the educational sciences.

It nevertheless remains difficult to convince teachers to undertake in-service training courses. The solution to this problem has in some cases been salary incentives and even the **use of in-service training as a criterion for professional advancement**. Amongst the countries which have adopted measures of this type are Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal.

It is interesting to note that, apart from refresher courses in the teacher's own specialisation, there are two other fields of great interest in in-service training: **training in new information and communication technologies** and **specific training for managerial duties** required for education. The latter is particularly appropriate to the management of schools, as well as for other functions such as heads of seminars or inspectors. In order to cope with these needs, numerous in-service training courses aim specifically to train school heads.

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[17] See also *In-Service Training of Teachers in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA Countries*, EURYDICE, 1995.

In selecting headteachers, it is necessary to be able to count on people specifically prepared for this task; in many countries, insufficient suitably qualified persons are available. Spain and Portugal have opted for the solution of providing prior training.

Another important aspect of in-service training is that there is a certain **demand for training courses** from teachers in those countries **where structural reforms have been carried out** (total or partial) or where curricular changes are significant (for example in Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom). The uncertainties inherent in any process of reform must be removed by education administrations offering training initiatives which help to resolve problems arising from the implementation of the new measures.

5.4. WORKING CONDITIONS

A factor mentioned earlier, that of an **ageing teaching force**, is in many countries affecting the working conditions of teachers. There are various reasons for the trend away from appointing young teachers. In the first place, it is not necessary to increase teaching staffs since, following the 'baby boom' of the 1950s and the general extension of schooling during the 1960s, the declining birth-rate starting in the 1980s has demanded a redistribution of existing teaching staff. In most countries, available teachers exceed the numbers of teachers required. Furthermore, the economic restrictions applied in a period of crisis have led to a more conservative policy with regard to increasing the number of teachers in a school.

An important exception to this trend is the case of France. French policy has been to bring 80% of children up to the level of the end of upper secondary education (the *Baccalauréat)*. This has led to the increased recruitment of teachers. Grants have been provided by the French government and the number of public examination places in the competition for entry to the teaching profession has been increased.

The socio-economic status of teachers has been affected by two complementary trends. On the one hand, we can observe an **implicit agreement on the need to raise their status** and, at the same time, there is a tendency to **place greater responsibilities** on teachers. This may be considered as the cornerstone of a school's educational development. As mentioned above, some countries consider participation in in-service training to be a good criterion for advancement in the teaching career which helps many teachers to improve their economic situation and their social image.

Over the decade in question, there has been a widespread trend towards **improved working conditions for teachers**. The reports from Belgium, Greece, Spain, France and Portugal point to positive measures taken in relation to certain aspects of working conditions. Belgium has granted its teachers greater flexibility in the exercise of their teaching duties and has provided them with the possibility of being freed from teaching tasks to participate in training. In Greece, shorter working hours are granted to teachers who are mothers, as well as to trade union representatives. Spain, for its part, has opened up the possibility of promotion to higher-level categories for teachers who fulfil certain requirements and pass examinations. Similarly, in France, teachers have been offered new professional advancement opportunities, their salaries have been raised, salary bonuses have been diversified, and paid leave of one year has been established in order to allow teachers to prepare for internal promotion or to undergo professional retraining. Finally, Portugal should be mentioned, with its creation of one single career path and the explicit establishment of the conditions required for professional progress so as to improve teachers' promotion prospects.

In conclusion, it appears that, in countries which have carried out more or less complex reforms during the decade in question (structural, curricular or administrative), **teachers at times feel somewhat pressurised by the extra burden placed on them by numerous changes, some of them very significant, over a short period of time**. A process of reform always involves a period of adaptation to new ways of working which, undoubtedly, always require an extra effort for the people who are ultimately responsible for implementing such reforms – teachers themselves. On this point, a number of national reports (Part II) highlight teachers' demands to be involved not only in implementing reforms, but also in the discussion and planning stages of such reforms. They also wish to have account taken of their views in the decision-making processes. It is difficult for teaching staff to take a positive part in a reform, which they regard as involving an extra workload for them, given that they have to change their normal routine, if they are not fully convinced of its advantages and usefulness.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

The Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries subscribe to the principle of equal educational opportunities for all children, regardless of their individual characteristics, socio-economic or cultural origin, mother tongue, race, gender, place of residence or physical or mental limitations. Nevertheless, it is one thing to support this principle and quite another to put it into practice.

In order to ensure that there should be genuinely equal opportunities, the first thing is to achieve full schooling for the entire population, at least during the compulsory phase. Fortunately, it is possible to affirm that this objective has already been reached in all EU and EFTA/EEA countries. Efforts must now be focused on achieving quality education for all.

Traditionally, education administrations have made a distinction between external educational disadvantages, stemming from sociological, economic, geographical or cultural factors and internal disadvantages of a physical, psychological, sensory or intellectual nature This differentiation is reflected in the fact that there are usually separate administrative departments responsible for dealing with these disadvantages, and therefore distinct policies and different specific plans of action. This situation is nevertheless changing. Currently, many of the principles which underlie equal opportunities policies are being reconsidered. Pupils with physical or psychological limitations are no longer referred to as handicapped, subnormal or defective, but as pupils with special educational needs. And this concept of special educational needs is seen as a continuum in which pupils are situated according to the quantity and quality of additional educational support they need. Thus pupils with problems due to limitations of a social, economic or cultural nature can be considered as pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to receive the extra support they need to achieve full integration in school. These changes in approach have been reinforced by the educational policy agreements reached since the establishment of the European Union.

These new approaches have led to new ways of addressing compensatory education. Formerly, catering for pupils with special educational needs was focused on educational measures which paralleled the education system. Now, by contrast, an effort is being made to cater for these pupils in the classroom, during the day-to-day activities and using the standard curriculum as far as possible.

Thus, policies designed to eliminate educational inequalities aim on the one hand to integrate pupils into ordinary schools without focusing on differences in their personal or group characteristics, and on the other to provide greater human, material and economic resources in order to provide special assistance for disadvantaged schools or pupils.

6.1. COMPENSATING FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES

A frequent finding from studies carried out into early school drop-out and class repetition rates in compulsory education is that these occur to a greater extent in areas with a low economic level which are deprived of cultural resources. This has led a fair number of countries to concentrate their compensatory efforts on specific geographical zones or schools which are at a disadvantage. Clear examples of this trend towards positive discrimination to help specific geographical areas are the French-speaking Community of Belgium, and France, where educational priority areas *(zones d'éducation prioritaires)* have been defined as areas to which greater human, material and economic resources are allocated. Similarly, Greece and the Netherlands have introduced an educational priority policy based on special support for schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils.

6.2. SPECIAL EDUCATION

For over two decades, there has been a clear trend among developed countries towards integrating children with physical and psychological handicaps into ordinary schools. This concept of integration springs from a belief that children with any type of limitation have the same rights as the others, including access to all the opportunities offered by the community. By educating them in ordinary schools and classrooms, they are being helped to adapt to normal situations and, at the same time, other pupils learn to accept them and work alongside them. Another frequent argument is that placing pupils with handicaps in special, separate schools reinforces their sense of isolation and the social barriers imposed by their limitations.

This trend is in line with the European Union's *Conclusions of the Council and the Ministers for Education meeting within the Council of 14 May 1987, concerning a programme of European collaboration on the integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools*, the key concept of which is to offer these children the maximum possible integration with the minimum necessary segregation. The programme proposed by the EU entails linking special education systems to integration in mainstream schools, as well as appropriate training for teachers, maximum participation by the parents, the development of teaching programmes and methods applicable to such situations and the study of the physical and social barriers which stand in the way of the integration of handicapped children. As part of the same policy, the *Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 31 May 1990* proposed integrating disabled children into the ordinary system of formal education as an essential option.[18]

Thus, the general trend followed by all countries is to integrate practically all pupils experiencing difficulties into ordinary schools and classrooms, leaving in special schools only those who, due to the extreme nature of their situation, require attention which cannot be provided elsewhere. Most special schools have disappeared, being incorporated into ordinary schools, except in the French and Flemish Communities in Belgium.

The integration of pupils with special educational requirements has to be understood as a 'process' being undertaken by all countries, although at different rates and to a varying extent. Although the Nordic countries are those in which this process has gone furthest, it can be affirmed that no country has yet completely abolished special education. A great number of countries have in recent years made great efforts to promote integration, including France, Luxembourg, Portugal, Finland and England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Iceland. Others go even further by imposing integration as mandatory in some schools (Spain, Italy and Austria). The Netherlands has implemented a project with such objectives called 'Going to school together'. Norway[19] and Italy are the first countries to have applied such a policy and to have given it legal form in laws of, respectively, 1975 and 1992.

Reference must also be made to the Belgian Flemish Community's initiative (the *geintegreerd onderwijs* – GON project, started in 1980) which enables certain categories of children previously confined to special schools to attend classes in mainstream schools and to have additional help in the form of a special education teacher and particular educational material. In Iceland, under a 1991 law, all pupils with learning difficulties, emotional or social problems and/or handicaps have a right to education appropriate to their needs in their local school. But there are still special schools for the most disabled pupils.

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[18] Other European Union actions in this field are:

- European co-operation programme for the integration of disabled children into ordinary schools;
- HELIOS Programme (I and II) for the vocational rehabilitation and economic integration of young handicapped people of both sexes;
- creation of EUCREA (European Association for the Creativity of Disabled People);
- the HORIZON Programme for the development of appropriate training and guidance systems for disabled people.

[19] In Norway, the integration of pupils with special educational needs goes back to 1975; at the present time, barely 1% are still provided for in special education.

The integration of pupils with special educational needs requires additional resources if it is to be successfully implemented. All countries are devoting a large amount of economic, material and human resources to this new concept of special education. Amongst other measures, school buildings have to be adapted to the new requirements and schools equipped both with specialised teaching aids and new, specially trained staff.

6.3. INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The spectacular increase over recent decades in the numbers of immigrants from very different cultures and civilisations is leading to a reconsideration of many economic, social, political, and of course educational issues. Each country has, to a greater or lesser degree, opted for a model of social integration for these new citizens, which has been translated into a variety of educational policy options to cater for such groups.

A pioneer of this type of policy, the Council Directive of 25 July 1977, 77/486 EEC, on the education of the children of migrant workers, obliges all EU Member States to offer free education, in accordance with their national situation, to children of workers from another Member State who are of compulsory school age, in compliance with the education legislation of the host state. Such education must specifically include the official language, or one of the languages, of the host state, taught in a manner adapted to the specific needs of these children. Furthermore, it establishes that host states have to promote the mother tongue and the culture of the child's country of origin.

This intercultural spirit in the EU has been reflected in the national policies of the Member States, which, following the recommendations of various Council of Ministers documents,[20] opt for an intercultural educational approach by promoting education for the children of immigrants within mainstream compulsory school classes.

The initiatives taken using this type of educational approach aim to improve the motivation of immigrant pupils, and enable historical and political factors, both past and present, to be reviewed from the diverse perspectives of pupils from different cultures, with each respecting the views of the other. According to the Council of Ministers documents, it would appear that such measures promote tolerance, the understanding of a cultural reality other than one's own, and greater respect for the human rights of all, whilst preventing the emergence of racist and xenophobic practices and attitudes. Thus they are presented as the most coherent type of general action for the educational integration of immigrants.

During the decade covered by this study, there is evidence of a tendency for ethnic and cultural minority children to be integrated into the ordinary education systems, just as is advocated in the EU policy. And, based on such integration, compensatory initiatives for these groups are being developed, with the teaching of the language of the host country as a second language along with its culture, while maintaining the mother tongue at the same time. Furthermore, most countries have understood that a genuinely intercultural education has to be aimed at all pupils, and not only at the children of foreigners.

A good example can be found in the Netherlands, where the laws on primary education (1985) and secondary education (amended in 1993) stipulate that teaching must reflect the fact that pupils are growing up in a multicultural society. In the French and Flemish Communities of Belgium, there is also increasing awareness of the need for an intercultural education for all. In Greece, since 1994, there is a network of intercultural schools where the approach aims at meeting the needs of populations with specific cultural characteristics. In Sweden, the curriculum has since 1994 emphasised the internationalisation of Swedish society and its increasing cross-border mobility. In Austria, the basic principle of intercultural education has been included in the curriculum since 1992/93. Since 1991, in Scotland, the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum has produced guidelines on multicultural education for pupils from 5 to 14.

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[20] In particular:
- Resolution 70/35 concerning the education of the children of migrant workers, adopted by the Ministers' Representatives on 27 November 1970;
- Council Resolution of 9 February 1976, comprising an action programme in the field of education;
- Recommendation 84/7 of the Council of Ministers of the Member States on maintaining cultural links between migrants and their countries of origin, and on rest facilities;
- Resolution of the Council and Member State Representatives meeting within the Council on racism and xenophobia, adopted on 29 May 1990.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

7.1. INTERNAL GUIDANCE SERVICES

All countries have acknowledged the right of pupils to receive personal and vocational guidance to help them to achieve their full personal development and to make decisions at decisive moments in their school careers. In addition, all countries consider that guidance is a task which should be carried out by the teaching staff generally during their day-to-day contacts with pupils.

Nevertheless, in order to complement the work of the teachers and support and advise the educational community, some countries have created posts of guidance teacher to provide services within schools. This is usually a teacher who has specialised in guidance, as in Denmark, where each *folkeskole* has for a long time had a guidance counsellor to advise teachers, pupils and parents and to establish contact with businesses and with other educational institutions.[21] In Sweden, since 1994, the headteacher has had overall responsibility for ensuring that all pupils receive educational and vocational guidance in school. Most schools employ specially trained guidance officers. In England and Wales, there is a long tradition of pastoral support and guidance for all pupils by teachers in primary and secondary schools. In secondary schools, careers teachers provide academic and vocational guidance in collaboration with the external careers services. In Iceland, there is provision under a law of 1991 for the appointment of school counsellors in individual schools or regional education offices.

Other countries, such as Spain, Finland and Scotland, have guidance teachers only in secondary schools. In Spain, a guidance unit or department has been set up in all publicly-financed secondary schools as of 1990. In Finland and Scotland, guidance services have been available to pupils in schools since the 1970s. This guidance concerns matters related to the curriculum and career choices, as well as personal and social matters, and is provided by teachers who have been promoted to the specialised post of guidance teacher. In Luxembourg, the Minister for Education established a psychological and educational guidance centre in 1987. This centre has the task in particular of providing psychological and educational guidance and information for pupils and of co-ordinating the organisation of the psychological and educational guidance services in the *lycées* and technical *lycées*.

A third group of countries does not have specialised staff to provide guidance in schools, but these tasks are carried out by teachers as part of their teaching duties.

Changes in guidance during the decade under review have been very few. Mention should be made of the important reforms carried out in Spain and France. In the case of Spain, the previously-mentioned 1990 law created a new organisational and functional model for guidance. In France, an order made under the 1989 law on educational guidance defines the principles and procedures for pupil guidance within the school system.

7.2. SUPPORT SERVICES EXTERNAL TO THE SCHOOL

All countries have for many years had services outside the schools whose fundamental task is to improve the quality of education by providing support for the work being carried out by teachers in the classroom. There are nonetheless notable differences in terms of what these services actually are and what their specific task is. For example, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, external support essentially consists of the psychological, medical and social centres (PMS), which provide support and assistance for pupils, in addition to offering them advice on academic and vocational choices. The activities of these centres, staffed by multi-disciplinary teams, extend from nursery to primary and all of secondary education. In Finland, the employment authorities provide vocational and further education guidance, family clinics give psychological and psychiatric counselling and health centres are responsible for the health care of pupils. The support services in Spain are provided by counselling teams and teaching and educational resource centres. The French also have two support services: the national information office on education and the professions *(Office National d'Information sur les enseignements et les professions* – ONISEP), whose job is to respond to information needs for educational and vocational guidance, and information and guidance centres *(Centres d'information et d'orientation* – CIO), which offer various information and advisory services to both a school and non-school public. The Netherlands has established a support structure comprised of various bodies responsible for helping schools to resolve any problem which they encounter and, at the same time, to systematically develop and improve education. These services provide links between educational theory and practice, subject content, educational psychology, school organisation and innovation. In addition to guidance centres, there are other institutions for evaluation, research and curriculum development.

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[21] With the reform of the *folkeskole* which came into effect on 1 August 1994, educational and vocational guidance is obligatorily included in all subjects taught from the first year of the folkeskole, and not the seventh year as was formerly the case.

In England and Wales, there is a range of external support services for schools, including educational psychology services, special educational needs assessment teams, education welfare services and careers services. In Scotland, psychological services have been publicly provided to all ages of pupil for several decades.

These support services are the responsibility of a variety of different authorities. In some countries they are state-run services, whereas in others they come under regional, or even local, education authorities. This variety of institutions and responsibilities makes it very difficult to produce an overall analysis of their development over the ten years in question. Similarly, the diversity of their responsibilities means that, in some countries, policy changes are governed by regional administrations or are not reflected in the form of legislation, with the result that they were not considered as reforms as understood for the purposes of this study. Consequently, the conclusions we have drawn must be viewed with extreme caution.

- Most countries did not carry out any major reforms in their external school support services. By contrast, Greece, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Iceland did in fact introduce legislation which profoundly modified the structure of their support services. The changes in Greece were aimed at reinstating the Pedagogical Institute as a body dedicated to educational research and management. In addition, educational and vocational guidance has been reorganised and extended to secondary education.
- In Spain, a new organisational model of support services has been established, leaving each Autonomous Community to regulate its own bodies. The most important modifications in support services concern the creation of educational guidance and psychology units by sector, and the merging of resource centres and teacher training colleges into 'teaching and resource centres' *(Centros de Profesores y de Recursos).*
- In Italy, external teaching support structures have been reorganised, particularly in lower secondary education, with the creation in 1983 of several special support services modelled on those initiated a few years earlier in primary education.
- In the Netherlands, the law on educational support structures *(Wet op de onderwijsverzorging* – WOV) which organises school support services, came into force in 1987. This law distinguishes between general support arrangements, which promote the activities of the school in general, and specialised support organisations, which operate in the field of educational research, measurement and curriculum development. General support arrangements include educational guidance services, at regional and national levels, and national educational advisory centres.
- In Portugal, the basic education law of 1986 *(Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo)* laid down provisions for support and supplements to education, the aim of which was to facilitate access to school and contribute to continuity of education and educational success. This was not implemented until 1990. The psychology and educational guidance services, provided for under the 1986 law, were established in 1991 as units with specialised educational staff.

- In Iceland, tasks like curricular direction, teaching advice, review of teaching materials and the execution of national examinations have been decentralised as part of the general process of decentralisation of the education system during the 1984-94 period.
- A different situation appears in Scotland which, without having implemented major modifications, has made a special effort in recent years to rationalise its psychological support services and to focus them on treating the family and on diagnosing needs.

In **conclusion**, while there is unanimous agreement as to the need for and importance of guidance and support services external to the school, each Member State has opted for a different model. This does not appear to have been especially influenced by educational policies, given that reforms have been few and narrow in scope, in most cases merely consisting of adjustments. An analysis of these small changes does not highlight any common trend or direction, beyond that of the general consensus previously mentioned.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

There is a clear concern on the part of education administrators to evaluate the system of education for which they are responsible. Member States, however, run into problems when it comes to planning how evaluation should be carried out if it is to provide useful information about the overall development of education in the individual country. Intimately linked with evaluation is the question of the inspection of the education system. In some countries, they go hand in hand in a single process which even extends to their being placed under the responsibility of a single body. In others, inspection is an integral part of the process of evaluating the system. In others again, in the light of the information received, it is difficult to ascertain whether reference is being made to the inspection or the evaluation process. Hence we have decided to address the two issues together under the same heading and refer to both of them without distinction.

Over the ten years covered by the study, some of the countries concerned carried out reforms of their strategies for evaluating their education systems or of the structures for inspecting them. Clearly, the changes made are more consequential in countries which have introduced structural and curricular reforms of a certain magnitude. Other factors indicate a need to evaluate the implementation, development and impact of the reforms undertaken. The most notable examples of this are Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal. However, other countries, which have not made such far reaching reforms, have also introduced changes into their structures for evaluating and inspecting the education system, such as France, Italy, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom.

All the reforms aim to turn the evaluation of the system into a useful instrument for analysing the development of education. To be useful, any process of evaluation or inspection of the education system should be based on the following principles (OECD, 1983, p. 131) and

- operate in a way that is fair to all concerned;
- be valid and relevant to current concerns;
- provide feedback for decision-making and encourage wider involvement in decisions;
- either be objective or make subjectivity explicit;
- be verifiable, i.e. open to checking;
- not distort the processes of teaching and learning;
- be understandable and the results communicable;
- be comprehensive and take account of the wide variety of aspects of education.

The reforms introduced tend to focus on two key principles. Our analysis is set out in the following sub-sections: the degree of decentralisation of evaluation; its function within the education system, and its contribution to the social system; the institutions responsible for evaluation; the characteristics of the evaluators; and finally, the content of the evaluation.

8.1. DEGREE OF DECENTRALISATION OF EVALUATION

As with the changes in general education administration, the trend as regards evaluation in education systems appears to be towards **gradual decentralisation**, although the task of defining the evaluation criteria which have to be used for the inspection of the education system is reserved, as has been mentioned, to the highest state education authorities. This implies reducing the control of the central authorities and increasing the control of the regional and local authorities, as well as of the schools themselves, albeit always retaining minimal general supervisory powers for the highest state authorities.

Moreover, the growing tendency to **involve parents, teachers and other members of the educational community** in the management of schools is also reflected in the fact that such groups play an important role in the evaluation of education.

Spain is representative of this trend. There, the organisation of inspection services has been restructured to adapt them to the new political and administrative structure which is becoming increasingly decentralised as a result of the 1978 Constitution's devolving organisational powers to the Autonomous Communities. At the same time, the higher inspectorate *(Alta Inspección)* was created so as to reserve to the central government a series of powers which give them ultimate responsibility for establishing the inspection criteria. Since the creation of school councils in each school, these have assumed certain supervisory tasks with regard to the general running of schools. Other examples of the decentralisation of inspection include the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

8.2. FUNCTION OF EVALUATION

In order to understand the changes in evaluation during the ten years under study, it must be borne in mind that this issue is currently addressed from a functional and practical standpoint rather than from a conceptual one. That is to say, the important thing is to know what specific function the social system in general, and the school system in particular, assigns to education inspection.

As is clear from the national reports (Part II), we are currently in a period of transition and inspectorates are progressively abandoning functions of control in favour of **supervisory and advisory functions**. The reports from Spain, Portugal and Finland demonstrate this. In other cases, such as that of France, the supervisory and advisory functions are being added to the function of control. The evaluation and inspection services now have the task not only of ensuring the homogeneous fulfilment in all schools of the major general objectives which society has assigned to education, but also of supervising the activities of these schools and helping in those cases where serious malfunctions occur.

In this respect, we have to speak of the search for a **balance between the simple evaluative function of inspection and its normative function.** Although control tasks are increasingly giving way to supervisory ones, this does not mean that evaluation should only observe (in the sense of detect). Such supervision must serve to establish criteria for identifying those elements which can be improved and how in each educational community dysfunctional elements can be remedied. It is becoming a widespread practice for evaluating bodies in the countries under study to make recommendations as to how each specific level should operate and what targets should be attained. This is demonstrated by the cases of the Flemish Community of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

8.3. INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR EVALUATION

Various countries have during the decade under review, **created organisations or departments responsible for the evaluation of the effectiveness or quality of the education system.** This is particularly the case in the Flemish Community of Belgium, which set up an educational development service in 1991 *(Dienst voor Onderwijsontwikkeling);* the French Community in Belgium which in 1994 set up an observation and monitoring unit for compulsory education *(Cellule d'Observation et du Pilotage de l'enseignement obligatoire)*; Spain, which in 1990 created its national institute for quality and evaluation *(Instituto Nacional de Calidad y Evaluación);* and Luxembourg, which established in 1993 a service for coordinating educational and technological research and innovation *(Service de Coordination de la Recherche et de l'Innovation pédagogiques et technologiques).* These institutions are responsible for creating indicators to measure the quality of education. Thus, the main effort of these organisations focuses on searching for indicators to make possible a more or less objective evaluation of the quality criteria for an education system, and to apply these indicators to the correct evaluation of the system. Furthermore, these institutions endeavour to produce reports summarising the results obtained and providing parameters for interpreting the results in order to offer those involved in education a general framework for analysing the development of the education system as a whole.

It remains to be seen whether these institutions should be placed under central, regional or local control. Although it seems evident that the indicators must be used at national level, this does not preclude the participation of regional authorities in drawing them up, as this would facilitate the use of the indicators in the national context. Likewise, it would appear necessary for such institutions to have a certain amount of independence in order to ensure that their reports are sufficiently objective and critical to serve as useful tools of analysis.

Efforts undertaken to **offer the information resulting from the evaluations to all members of the educational community, with the greatest possible transparency,** represent another relevant trend. The United Kingdom, with its open information policy, is perhaps the clearest reflection of this tendency, which also appears in other countries, such as Belgium, Spain, France, the Netherlands and Portugal, which have established periodic public reports on the development of their education systems.

It should certainly be pointed out that in some countries, such as Sweden, which have no new institutions to assume the function of general evaluation of the education system, the functions of the institutions responsible for such matters have been restructured. In Finland, the evaluation carried out by the provincial state offices was first changed more towards guidance and then discontinued altogether in 1993. The evaluation required by the legislation then became entirely the responsibility of the National Board of Education *(Opetushallitus/Utbildningsstyrelsen).*

8.4. CHARACTERISTICS OF EVALUATORS

In contemporary society, a reality as complex as that of education needs to have its evaluation carried out by evaluators trained in the use of effective methods of investigation and evaluation. Obviously the inspector must be a specialist who has received specific training. It also seems logical and reasonable for this role to be given to teachers.

The solution adopted in most countries to this theoretically paradoxical issue is to combine the two ideas. The trend thus appears to be to **train serving teachers in inspection tasks**. There are two ways of doing this: providing very specialised training for selected teachers, or setting up mixed inspection teams comprised of experts and serving teachers. Countries which have undertaken reforms in this area, either by creating new inspection bodies or by remodelling existing ones (Spain, France and Luxembourg, for instance) appear to be following these trends.

8.5. CONTENT OF EVALUATION

Evaluation of the education system is tending towards a **more global analysis** of the way education functions. Thus, evaluation now appears to be centred on a concurrent examination of teachers, pupils and schools (management, facilities, use of resources, financial health).

Most of the countries demonstrate this concern for evaluating the system as a whole. This involves an appraisal of the compliance of curricula with general guidelines and with the requirements of the school, the suitability of methodologies, the academic performance of pupils, the relationship between the school and its community and the satisfaction of education consumers themselves.

Nevertheless, there is no consensus as to how an overall evaluation can best be carried out. There are two possible alternative models: appraisal of the effectiveness of the process or appraisal of its results. Traditionally, models for evaluating an education system have been centred almost exclusively on results. In general, quality of results has been measured on the basis of academic testing of pupils by external bodies (i.e. external tests). Currently, there appears to be a more widespread **emphasis on processes**. Countries like Spain, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal are leaning in this direction. However, the results-oriented model, which evaluates the system's global performance through national examinations at the beginning or end of certain stages, has not been ruled out either. This model is followed in the United Kingdom (England and Wales, with National Curriculum external assessment at 16 years of age, and Scotland, with national tests in English and mathematics at 8 and 12 years of age) and to a lesser extent in the French Community in Belgium, with a standardised examination for diagnostic purposes, introduced in 1994 for three years. In Iceland, nationally co-ordinated examinations in Icelandic, mathematics, English and Danish are given to pupils at the age of 16.

Many countries are opting for a combination of both models. On the one hand, the results-oriented model detects and provides information on failings in the system; on the other hand, the process-oriented model analyses which factors in the process cause these failings in order to optimise them.

Different methods are available for acquiring the necessary information to carry out evaluation: global education statistics on all schools on the basis of standardised tests without academic repercussions; external, national and public examinations, with academic repercussions; programmes for evaluating representative samples; specific evaluation programmes for different areas or specific schools, etc.

One of the problems with all these different methods is comparability. Standardised tests and national public examinations are easy to compare, but they do not take into consideration the school context and with increasingly open curricula, the design of such examinations poses problems. Evaluation using samples or analysing specific schools, albeit better suited to the growing trend towards more flexible curricula in education systems, yields results which are difficult to compare at national level. Another problem is the possibility of such evaluation serving ends other than those for which they were intended. There are fears that standardised tests and external examinations might be converted into a gauge of the quality of schools which would simply serve to position them in a hierarchy, without regard to their specific characteristics, and thus create rivalry between schools or separate them into clearly-defined categories ('elite', 'mediocre' or 'bad') which, though this might - according to some - have a stimulating effect, may also have harmful consequences. Thus, there does not appear to be any clear trend in this direction and the various countries are trying out all types of formulae.

Finally, mention should be made of the appraisal of the effectiveness of education systems in terms of **cost-benefit analysis**. This can be decisive, since education is an economic investment imposing a high cost on state budgets. The policy of reform in Portugal, England and Wales and Scotland demonstrates a new preoccupation with the economic aspects of evaluation and their desire to carry out a financial appraisal of evaluation. Although they have not made it explicit, the remaining countries also share this concern. In Finland, for example, the National Board of Education *(Opetushallitus/ Utbildningsstyrelsen)* evaluates educational outcomes, which include the effectiveness, financial accountability and efficiency of education.

9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a final résumé of this comparative study, we first sum up here the most important issues addressed in the previous sections and, secondly, make a few comments on the evolution of reforms which have already taken place in the education systems of the countries under consideration and possible trends for the future. This section does not claim to establish definitive conclusions on the issue, but merely to contribute a few thoughts on a subject which is open to a variety of interpretations.

9.1. SUMMARY

The **aims of compulsory education** are essentially the same in all European countries and have not been subject to major changes over the decade1984-94. The emphasis placed on some of these aims and the strategies for achieving them have however altered. Equality of educational opportunity continues to be a priority, and in all countries specific policies have been adopted to achieve this aim.

Another on-going aim is to provide the whole population with basic education. Nonetheless, this concept has itself been broadened to adapt to new social and economic demands. Moreover, the simultaneous promotion of historical and cultural continuity and of social progress is another of the classic functions attributed to education. European Union and EFTA/EEA countries maintain and reinforce this, primarily by trying to ensure cultural diversity and to implement regional initiatives.

Another important objective of compulsory education is to prepare children for adult life in all its facets (personal development, social, work and family), although in practice this had previously been limited to social integration through the world of work. Only nowadays is this objective taking on its full proportions.

Two emerging aims of education are 'learning to learn' and 'adapting to a constantly changing world'. Both constitute a new and fundamental requirement for education at the end of the twentieth century which only a few pioneering countries have nonetheless explicitly included amongst their aims. The well-being of children during their schooling is an aim which is present, albeit not in precise terms, in the intentions of almost all European education systems.

The compulsory education structures have in general not been subject to far-reaching reform in Europe over the decade covered by this report. Reforms have rather consisted of extending the duration of schooling or modifying its stages and cycles. Thus, almost half of the countries have extended their compulsory schooling, either by raising the school leaving age (which for full-time education is 15 or 16 years of age), or by lowering the starting age (generally set at 5 or 6 years of age, or even 4).

In almost all countries, compulsory education is tantamount to compulsory schooling and it is provided free of charge by the state. Freedom for private individuals or bodies to establish schools and freedom of choice of school are however maintained and even promoted in some cases.

The most common structure for compulsory education – towards which many countries have evolved – is a division into two main stages: primary and lower secondary education. At these stages, the general tendency is to achieve a balance between a common, basic education and diversification. But there is a group of countries which have opted – some of them a long time ago – for a single structure of compulsory education, followed by an upper secondary level. Thus, although the reforms differ from one country to another, depending on their standpoints, they tend to converge in the end. A single certificate at the end of compulsory education, generally granted without an external examination, is the solution most countries have adopted.

With respect to the **general administration of education,** it can be said that the reforms have brought about a gradual decentralisation, although overall control of the education system has continued to be retained by central government bodies. Another important trend is towards the increased participation of society in education. These two aspects may be observed, although to varying degrees, in all areas of education (curriculum, teaching staff, assessment and financing), as well as at the different levels of decision-making (central government, regional government, local authority and school). Curriculum development has, for example, been subject to a trend in both directions. Countries which traditionally had a very open curriculum, determined only by local bodies, are now tending to establish at least a common-core curriculum for the entire territory of the state. On the other hand, countries which traditionally had a centralised curriculum are opting for greater flexibility, with the state retaining only the task of defining broad guidelines which have to be followed at lower levels of decision-making. Likewise, the same dual tendency can be detected in the evaluation of education systems, with central definition of evaluation criteria and delegated management and execution of supervisory tasks. Thus, we generally find a position half-way between centralisation and decentralisation in which the state retains the power to establish minimum requirements for ensuring that education is homogeneous throughout its territory, whilst opening up the possibility of adapting education to regional and local conditions.

As far as **school management and administration** are concerned, there is a trend towards greater autonomy for schools. In most Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries, there is a tendency towards delegating a greater number of responsibilities and management tasks to schools. Likewise, the participation of the educational community in the running of schools has increased. Thus, practically all European countries have governing bodies at school level which include representatives from the various sectors of the educational community. Most of the education systems introduced these collegiate governing bodies at the beginning of the 1980s, which has meant that the reforms carried out during the decade under review have, in the main, consisted of a gradual increase in their powers.

As regards the management of schools,[22] it is difficult to identify any single trend. On the one hand, schools are being given greater powers to enable them to properly take decisions resulting from their recent autonomy. The whole educational community is becoming involved because it has more influence over decision-taking. Furthermore, in contrast to the option of some countries to have school heads appointed after a special selection procedure from a special body separate from that of teachers and with special training, there is another trend in other countries for heads to be elected from among the teachers themselves. Finally, there is a certain tendency in some countries to adopt business-style management models for schools.

The **funding** of education and financial administration, following a trend parallel to that in general administration, is perhaps one of the aspects which has been most subject to decentralisation, although decisions regarding the total resources allocated to schools and fundamental financial responsibility remain with the central authorities.

As for the **curriculum**, reforms have been made in all countries, since schools could probably not survive in a decade marked by such important socio-economic, scientific and even in some countries political changes, without modifying their curricula and forms of education. These changes, some of which have been reinforced by structural modifications in the education systems, have affected very different curriculum-related elements.

As a consequence of a reconsideration of what should constitute basic skills in contemporary western societies, specific subjects have come to assume a special interest in new curriculum developments, including, in particular, foreign languages, new information and communication technologies, and subjects related to civic and social behaviour. Priority is also tending to be given to the pupil's acquisition of thinking strategies and intellectual working tools, as opposed to the mere acquisition of facts.

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[22] For greater detail, see *School Heads in the European Union*, EURYDICE, 1996.

The organisation of the curriculum has also been the subject of certain reforms which have in general tended to restructure it into broad areas of knowledge rather than into individual subjects. As a consequence, the time needed to attain the defined objectives in these broad areas is now established not so much in years as in stages or cycles lasting several years.

As regards methodology, the predominance of pupil-centred techniques is increasingly being consolidated, strongly underpinned by learning through discovery, with constructivist psychology theories playing a fundamental role in the area of pedagogy. The preferred type of assessment is global in character and formative and on-going rather than summative and based on marks. In addition, selection procedures for the transfer from primary to secondary have practically disappeared. Moreover, there has been a strengthening of the common core curriculum in primary and lower secondary education, the two main stages of the compulsory period.

In the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries strong support is being given to both initial and in-service training for **teachers**, and there is great concern to improve the social and professional status of teachers.

In various countries, the teaching body has been restructured. Initial training has also been subject to an almost total reorganisation, following which its duration has been increased, now lasting a minimum of three years. It has acquired the status of higher education in those countries where that was not already the case, and that of university studies in countries where such training was already at higher education level. In addition, many countries have organised new systems of initial training or have created new institutions where such training is provided. Some modifications have also been made to the initial training curriculum, amongst which analysis of teaching practices should be mentioned as an essential element.

The impetus being given to in-service training for teachers takes the form of the creation of new institutional or organisational structures specifically devoted to coordinating training, and in some cases these are linked to universities. There is also a tendency to use training as one of the criteria for career advancement. The subjects most in demand for in-service training are those related to new information and communication technologies, the performing of management duties (especially as school heads) and the implementation of curricular change.

Within the field of **compensating for inequalities,** there appears to be a trend towards altering the terminology used; pupils are no longer referred to as handicapped or disabled, but as pupils with special educational needs. This concept is seen as a continuum in which pupils are situated according to the quantity and quality of extra educational support they need. This has led to a new approach to compensatory education: in future, pupils with problems are less and less likely to be transferred to special education as education policy shows an increasing interest in the integration of such pupils in mainstream education.

The policies developed include two complementary elements: on the one hand, the integration of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream schools and, on the other hand, the provision of greater human, material and financial resources and special assistance to give schools specific help.

In all countries, the need for and importance of **guidance** and establishing **school support services** is highlighted, although the choices made by the various countries are very diverse. This diversity and the paucity of reforms make it difficult to establish a common trend in this field.

Finally, as far as **evaluation and inspection** of compulsory education are concerned, one of the most widespread preoccupations is to involve parents, teachers and the various members of the educational community in the evaluation of the general operation of both education and the schools. Furthermore, there is a clear intention to inform society about the results of the evaluation of the education system, which is another indication of efforts to involve the whole of society in the analysis of education.

In relation to the evaluation of the system, the different countries give supervisory, advisory and teaching support functions to teachers. The aim is for an optimum balance between the purely analytical function of evaluation and its normative function. In addition to analysing the teacher's work and the pupil's performance, there is nowadays a tendency to take a more global view of all the factors which influence the proper functioning of the school, including the economic factor which is determining and which some countries consider to be of capital importance. Likewise, there is a marked interest in educational processes, although a few countries still retain appraisal of the final performance of pupils.

Some countries have created bodies, institutions or departments which are specifically dedicated to evaluating the effectiveness or quality of the education system. Appointments have also been made of individuals with responsibility for the overall design of indicators for carrying out such evaluation. Nevertheless, there is a general trend for evaluation to be carried out by serving teachers, provided that they have been properly trained to carry out such tasks.

9.2. CONCLUDING REMARKS

For half a century, education has been considered in industrialised countries as the key to economic development, improving the quality of life and attaining a more fair and egalitarian society. Since this is one of the easiest social factors to modify, the governments of all western countries have embarked upon numerous reforms in the field of education.

We are already familiar with the development of attitudes to **educational reforms**, and the confidence placed in the ability of such reforms to transform society. It began with boundless optimism during the decades immediately following the Second World War, endorsed by such contrasting currents of thought as the human-capital theory and functionalism, which led to major structural reforms in all western education systems, as well as a spectacular expansion in schooling. Only in the mid-1970s did enthusiasm began to dwindle in the light of the few social changes which had resulted from a quarter of a century of educational reforms. People began to speak of a crisis in education and of the need to broaden the approach to education, opening it up beyond the restricted field of schooling. At the same time, calls for greater emphasis on the processes for carrying out reforms and evaluating their results began to be heard.

During the 1980s, criticisms multiplied concerning the imbalance between the volume of resources of all kinds invested in the improvement of education and the results obtained. The most pessimistic of these accused the school system of being incapable of preventing large scale failure, of failing to reduce social inequalities and of being poorly adapted to the employment market, concluding that educational reforms have very little impact on economic growth and social equality (Simmons, 1980, in Husen and Postlethwaite, 1988, p. 4240). Though not taking such an extreme position, many voices were raised to demand that unfettered expenditure on education should be curbed, since increased resources did not always result in better quality. Above all, they demanded that more attention should be paid to strategies for implementing reforms and evaluating their results.

Nonetheless, these criticisms - albeit to a large degree justified - appear exaggerated and not totally in accordance with reality. There is no conclusive evidence on how to improve education systems or how reforms actually affect educational performance, although in retrospect it is impossible to deny the general progress in education and its influence on the social system as a whole. Therefore, it seems clear that it is necessary to continue innovating, whilst of course controlling the resources invested in reforms and evaluating their effects on the quality of education in the broader sense, that is to say, focusing on more than mere academic achievements. This conclusion, which could be described as a 'positive realistic view', seems to have been arrived at during the past decade and as a consequence new improvements in education systems have been initiated.

There may be many **reasons** for continuing to embark on educational reforms in Europe, as in the developed world in general, in spite of the severe criticisms of recent years. Firstly, we should point out the economic motivation, the need to avoid 'missing the technological boat'. There is also residual optimism or moderation that, in spite of everything, education makes sense and improving it contributes to the development not only of the individual but also of society as a whole. Secondly, there is a humanitarian or egalitarian motivation for trying to ensure that ever broader sections of the population have access to quality education. Finally, there are also reasons of a purely political nature, which bring every government to make a legitimate effort to satisfy the demands of its electorate by providing improvements.

The era of naive optimism is well and truly over. It is a known fact that the processes through which reforms of education systems are translated into overall improvements in education are complex and slow, and that these improvements in their turn have an impact on social and economic progress. It is an acknowledged fact that the cost of reforms is not always proportional to the benefits derived from them, and that, in a period of economic recession, expenditure needs to be reduced and controlled. Because of all this,and despite the fact that mechanisms for improving education continue to be devised, the volume of reforms is diminishing throughout the western world.

Thus, in the Member States of the European Union and in the EFTA/EEA countries, rather than major general reforms, what has actually been taking place during the decade in question is a continuing process of evolution and of partial innovations aimed at improving education systems. As in the rest of the western world, there is concern about the effectiveness of reforms and their economic repercussions. Expenditure on education has been cut back, or at least frozen, in most of these countries as a result of both the economic crisis and a logical rationalisation stemming from the realisation that increased expenditure does not always translate into better results.

Still valid are the recommendations of P. Coombs (1968): we must seek new **complementary forms of education** which are more flexible and leave more room for social initiative. Alternative projects are being implemented everywhere (on-the-job training placements, extra-curricular activities, informal education, etc.) which reduce costs and lighten the excessive load on the formal education system, at the same time offsetting its inevitable rigidity and slow response to new training requirements. These are ways of improving education for the population without excessive cost or drastic changes.

However, at the same time, **education systems are gradually tending to incorporate** some of the activities which started out as peripheral. This has happened with guidance services and resource centres as well as with compensatory education activities, such as support for the schooling of immigrant children, attention to rural areas, special schools, non-standard ways of completing compulsory schooling, etc. To a greater or lesser extent, depending on how they are organised in each country, these have become ordinary school services or have disappeared as separate services and been integrated into the mainstream education system. This is no doubt a consequence of the trend towards integration in education which has been gathering pace over the latter half of the twentieth century. In order to obtain an idea of progress in European education, it is also necessary to remember that this institution, which was created in Greece 25 centuries ago for free males belonging to a social and intellectual elite, has today become a place where boys and girls from every walk of life, sometimes of diverse races and cultures and with a broad range of abilities and disabilities, receive a common education.

Even now, great **structural differences** can be found between the education systems of the Member States of the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries. This is normal since they stem from the different traditions, histories and cultures of each country. However, it is harder to understand why under the guise of greater harmonisation, they are embarking on reforms which at times lead to opposite structural results, even though the pedagogical spirit and curricular concept behind them do bear a great resemblance.

With only a few exceptions, compulsory education has not undergone radical structural change anywhere. However, **secondary education** is more subject to reorganisation than primary education, which is more stable and satisfactory everywhere. Secondary education is trying to find its place: merged with or separated from primary education, divided into branches or a single whole, divided into stages or cycles, etc. It is without doubt the most problematic and controversial sector of the education systems in all the countries because it is here that are found pupils in the most difficult age bracket, and because it is in this sector that there have been most changes in approach with the raising of the school leaving age. Throughout history, primary education has kept clearly to its task and continues to do so: to ensure that all children acquire basic skills and above all a command of reading and writing and elementary mathematics. In recent times, primary education methods have been considerably improved. Primary education has received increased resources to achieve its objectives, while at the same time expanding its goals to encompass emotional, social and artistic elements, all within a very well-established framework. On the other hand, secondary education has evolved from being a level designed for a social elite, leading subsequently to higher education, to being a system of general education for the entire population. This important fact has necessitated a substantial change in perspective, with a move away from a high level academic approach towards a totally different one to provide a satisfactory general education for all pupils. The difficulties inherent in such an approach are evident and all countries have had to embark on a search for possible solutions. This has entailed trying out various formulae to accommodate all pupils without lowering the standards of the most capable; to maintain a satisfactory link between primary and lower secondary education on the one hand, and lower secondary and post-compulsory education on the other; and to include the latest scientific and social advances in the curriculum at this level, without losing sight of its vocation of providing education for all.

There has been a certain convergence between the countries with respect to their **preferred areas of educational reform over the past decade**. In the first place, major modifications have taken place in **the governance of education and the distribution of decision-making responsibilities**. In some countries, this has occurred as the logical consequence of a wider process of political decentralisation, in others simply as the result of greater awareness of the need to bring educational decision-making closer to users. Finally, in another group of countries, there has been a redistribution of responsibilities among already decentralised bodies. However, in all countries it is possible to observe the same common denominator of concern to give greater responsibility over decision-making to non-central levels of administration and to schools themselves.

This phenomenon, has also produced a trend in all countries to develop channels for the **participation of society** and to seek new partnerships or joint responsibility for education. There is still a long way to go, but steps have already been taken in this direction. These include the establishment of school councils within schools, with community representation and varying powers, or the establishment and maintenance of schools by private enterprise, the increasing cooperation between business and the education system, opening up schools to the local community which offers great potential for mutual cooperation, etc. It seems likely that state intervention in the field of education (of varying significance according to the country), which was essential for a period, will gradually diminish in favour of civil society, which could be beneficial to democratic social participation as well as to education itself.

The **organisation and management of schools** has also been the subject of modifications in most countries, for a variety of reasons – firstly, due to demand for such a distribution of decision-making responsibilities and the accordingly greater autonomy of schools, secondly, for reasons related to social participation and the democratisation of the governing processes, and also as a result of the re-designed curricula which require more teamwork from teachers and new methods of organisation in schools, and, finally, because advances in knowledge about the importance of group interaction have led to greater interest in these topics in schools.

These trends follow the principle of devolution, meaning the delegation of power, especially by central government to a regional or local administration. This leads not only to administrative decentralisation and deconcentration, but also to fostering the participation and initiative of all social groups, from both inside and outside the school.

The **curriculum** is without doubt the aspect which has undergone the most change between 1984 and 1994. Perhaps because it is inherently a field in constant evolution, not only because of continuous advances in knowledge, but also because the reforms in other areas of the education system (aims, structure of the system, integration of pupils with special needs, intercultural education, etc.) frequently have an impact on it. It is the design of the curriculum that has changed along with the different bodies responsible for its development. Nevertheless, this has brought about changes in the organisation of curriculum areas and in the emphasis placed on the respective importance of processes and results.

Finally, we should mention one preferred area of educational reform in all countries which is **evaluating education systems and monitoring the value of investment in educational reforms**. This is a result of the process followed in the design of the reforms explained above and also of the delegation of powers. It is logical for the state, while it decentralises and democratises decision-making, to be concerned to guarantee the homogeneity and quality of educational services. Hence all governments are seeking a formula to reconcile the autonomy of regional and local communities, and that of schools, with an acceptably uniform evaluation of educational processes and outcomes.

Analysis of the fundamental concerns regarding education in Europe enables us to identify the reforms undertaken during the years in question, and to sketch in the **prospects for the future**. Naturally, there is no certain answer to a question of this nature but it is possible to isolate the elements pointing to some of the social, economic and cultural tendencies which will affect European education in the next century.

This is an era of profound social, demographic, cultural, scientific, economic and political change throughout the world. These changes have had a powerful impact on education. While it is impossible to determine the role education plays in relation to all of these changes, there is no doubt that it does play a part. It can therefore be concluded that the rapid evolution of society at the end of the millennium has a considerable effect on educational approaches, content and strategies.

We must also cast our minds towards the coming inclusion of the Eastern European countries into the 'wider Europe', which will complicate the educational landscape even further. At the moment these countries – whose situations are all different – have several internal problems to resolve, and this may oblige them to postpone possible reforms in the educational field. Nevertheless, many of them are beginning to cast their eyes towards western Europe, and changes in mentality, even more profound than the political and economic upheavals, are beginning to break through. As was stated in the world education report,

> Really fundamental change is intangible: a new awareness that democracy and civil society are possible, in addition to a different future for which education must in a way be the preparation (Unesco, 1994, p. 69).

In the light of what has occurred in recent years, it is also probable that the immigration into Europe of citizens from developing countries will continue to increase. For this reason, the intercultural approach, already a major concern in some of the Union's education systems, will probably continue to gain ground, thereby further complicating an already complex situation, and obliging the prosperous and ethnocentric European society to avoid closing in upon itself and to endow education with new perspectives. There is no doubt that the western world still has much to offer as well as to learn in terms of human and cultural exchanges with the developing countries.

In any case, the greatest challenge facing school systems in the future is to provide a satisfactory response to the educational needs of an unpredictable world which is changing at an accelerating rate and in which society makes ever greater demands in terms of quality. Scientific and technological advances, with the whole chain of social changes which they entail, oblige the education system to address the serious problem of incorporating knowledge into its curricula and to bring its staff up to date. In the face of this dilemma, the solution would appear to be to aim for an educational approach which is oriented more specifically towards the acquisition of systematic and metacognitive skills to enable the knowledge acquired by various means and at different stages of life to be organised.

The changes in economic and productive structures which have been taking place over recent years, and are expected to continue to increase, also have enormous repercussions on education systems, not only from the standpoint of careers guidance in secondary and higher education but also, and above all, as a result of the new approach which entails fostering the sense of initiative and the adaptability required for the new employment market. Furthermore, the need for education to prepare human beings to confront creatively non-employment, which it is predicted will constitute the major part of their lives, is seen as unavoidable. Delayed entry into the job market, early retirement, greater life expectancy and the reduction in working hours mean that nowadays approximately only one third of an individual's lifetime is spent working. It is very likely that free time will continue to increase, with important human and social repercussions for leisure and training.

As a logical consequence of the great changes predicted for education in the immediate future, mention must be made of the need for imagination to address the issue of adapting teaching staff to their new roles and of social support for the difficult task with which teachers are confronted. It is already a priority concern in all countries to improve the situation of teachers and reorganise their initial and in-service training. Nevertheless, no substantial reforms in this field have yet been introduced to match those in other fields. In all likelihood, innovative measures over the coming years will focus, to a great extent, on teachers themselves as the key to enabling education systems to rise to the major challenges facing them.

All of these and many other familiar phenomena which shape contemporary European society arouse both anxieties and hopes for the future. The words of Lesourne (1993, p. 29-30) could serve as a summary:

> What does analysis of the future show us? That a new society is always in the making; a society saturated with information, steeped in science and technology, open to the world which is wondering about the meaning of existence and its destiny. For this new society,

> a new education system must gradually emerge with a wide range of types of educational provision, training paths, curricula and participants, which is capable of interesting young people as well as adults and able to adapt to the most diverse demands - an education system which will need to be gradually invented through incremental adjustments to the current system.

All countries share the same concern – to point the reforms of their education systems in the right direction. Mutual support is therefore essential, not only to enable experience to be shared and paths to progress to be mapped out jointly but also because the interdependence which we need will never arise from isolated solutions.

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PART II

DESCRIPTION OF REFORMS BY COUNTRY

Each country's report is under the responsibility of its Unit in the Network

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BELGIUM (FRENCH COMMUNITY)

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

The past ten years have been marked by a far-reaching reform of Belgium's institutions which has led to the adoption of federal structures entrusting the Communities *(Communautés)* with the education sector, amongst other fields of intervention. It should be noted that in Belgium there are three Communities (French, Flemish and German-speaking), each endowed with a legislative authority and an executive.

In the field of education, major trends over the past ten years have included on-going consultations on educational curricula, better provision for pupils in difficulty, and the adapting of technical and vocational education to match the real needs of the business world. An important milestone was the publication of the OECD report on education in 1992 which pointed to the general quality of Belgium's education system, but also highlighted the disturbing number of pupils who are required to repeat the school year. As a result of this finding, a new strategy is being introduced which focuses on education by cycle and on the definition of core skills to be acquired by all pupils by the end of each cycle.

Chronologically, the various reforms have been as follows:

The duration of compulsory schooling was extended to 12 years in 1983. It now begins at age 6 and ends at age 18. The objective of this reform was to raise the level of pupils' qualifications and thereby help improve their chances of entering the job market. Since it also delays entry into the job market, this reform has helped to reduce the percentage of unemployed young people. Ten years on, the idea of 12 years of compulsory schooling is no longer being called into question, although the period it covers (from 6 to 18 years of age) is now the subject of further debate.

Starting with the 1984/85 school year, the period of initial training for primary and lower secondary teachers was extended from two to three years. This extra year was needed to provide more in-depth practical training, as well as to improve mastery of the subjects taught.

In 1988, education was officially transferred from national to Community level. This ensured that greater account was taken of the specific requirements of each linguistic group, but was not accompanied by sufficient financial resources to enable new more voluntaryist political policies to be defined. Thus the initial years of the "communitarisation of education" came to be marked by a sweeping protest movement from the teaching body demanding *inter alia* an increase in teachers' pay.

In 1989, educational priority areas were set up along the lines of the model already tried out in France. Based on the principle of promoting positive discrimination measures to assist groups of pupils who are disadvantaged or who are confronting school failure, this initiative was implemented by allocating specific budgetary resources to certain educational institutions.

In 1990, *conseils de participation* (participation councils) were introduced into every school throughout the French Community's education system. The main aim of these councils is to put forward opinions and proposals regarding the material, administrative and pedagogical organisation of the school concerned.

In 1992, following the conclusions of the OECD report, the French Community started an in-depth reform of compulsory schooling which has, in particular, led to the adoption – in consultation with all parties concerned – of a progressive global strategy of joint activities by the various education networks (*réseaux*). It was decided, *inter alia*, to structure schooling into cycles, harmonise school timetables in secondary education, define core skills for each cycle and streamline the number of technical and vocational courses from nearly 450 to 150.

In 1993, the adoption of the *Charte de l'enseignement en alternance* (Charter for Alternating Training) led to the development of a practice as yet largely unknown in the French Community based on greater dialogue between the worlds of education and industry.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

In order to ensure maximum coherence throughout the entire education and training system, the *Conseil de l'Éducation et de la Formation de la Communauté française* (Education and Training Council of the French Community) – one of whose tasks is to analyse the status of the education and training system and to advise ministers – adopted three general objectives applicable to all the education networks and all levels of compulsory education.

The objectives are as follows:

Education should promote the personal development of each individual pupil.

One of the missions of education is to ensure the personal fulfilment and happiness of pupils, resulting in the development of a positive attitude towards oneself (self-confidence, independence), towards others (respect, tolerance, cooperation, solidarity) and towards the social group (participation in joint decision-making, in activities and in the management of community life).

By encouraging young people to build up their knowledge, education should lead them to take an active part in economic life.

Education should rightly be a predominant factor in preparing pupils for exercising an occupation, for their integration and participation in society. This objective of integration should not be seen in the narrow sense of instilling know-how that is directly transferable to the job market, but rather of enabling pupils to think and act in keeping with the knowledge to which they have access. Greater emphasis is being placed on the tools for acquiring knowledge than on scientific information itself.

Education should lead young people to become responsible citizens in a free society.

The objective is to train citizens capable of creating and keeping alive democracy in all areas where their sovereignty should be expressed. Through the practical definition of participant-oriented approaches, pupils will be encouraged to take part in the exercise of power, guaranteeing constitutional rights by respect for the general will and for minorities. When they are represented by others and confer mandates on their delegates, young people will have learned to formulate these mandates clearly and to verify the execution of them by demanding accountability from the delegates.

It is necessary to devise education capable of encouraging young people to question the nature of power, the ways in which power can be exercised, the functioning of institutions, mechanisms and structures, the identification of the forces they encounter and the position citizens ought to adopt towards these institutions in order to preserve their own identity as well as democracy itself.

Continuing its work, the *Conseil de l'Éducation et de la Formation* has also endeavoured to define specific objectives for "basic education". This exercise has been conducted in parallel with a debate on the review of structures to foster a more harmonious transition between nursery school and primary school. By the end of this process, "basic education" should be less compartmentalised and more heedful of the differences between pupils' rates and methods of learning. The aim is to achieve a "school for success" (*école de la réussite*) for all children.

"Basic education" (i.e. nursery and primary) schools are thus being urged to participate in:

- fostering child development, in particular by ensuring greater complementarity between children's own development and their learning;
- constructing the various areas of knowledge, know-how and learning to cope successfully with life and the future by means of an education centred on the learning child;
- socialising children, helping them to learn about and practise citizenship by "integrating" them into society and developing in them attitudes and abilities that will enable them at the earliest possible age to play an active part, entering into and taking part in the changes occurring in society.

Acting in support of the objectives defined by the *Conseil de l'Éducation et de la Formation* and forming part of the same aim, each education network is free to define, refine and complement these objectives.

In this spirit, the Ministry of Education for the French Community network presented an education plan for the education network of the French Community in 1991. The broad guidelines of this project reflect the key elements defining the goals of compulsory education. One of its goals is to train young people to integrate, take action, find their own equilibrium and realise their full potential in a changing world where knowledge, ideas and technologies are developing at an ever faster pace and where values are constantly being called into question. This project also aims to train young people in their role as responsible citizens and encourage them to build a more humane, more tolerant, more supportive and fairer society.

The general thrust of this plan falls within the context of the concept of neutrality in public education as defined in the Declaration of 8 May 1963 and updated by the Decree of 31 March 1994. The project is based essentially on the requirements for objectivity in the presentation of facts, on intellectual honesty in the service of truth and on a gradual process of self-discovery.

Finally, this educational project highlights the need throughout all school activities to promote training that is harmoniously developed in line with three main complementary and inter-related objectives: to educate in terms of knowledge and know-how, to educate in terms of social and civic sensibilities, and to foster personal development and the ability to make the best of life.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Following the constitutional review of 1988, powers for education were transferred to the Communities. Only three matters specified in Article 127 of the Constitution still remain within the federal remit. These are:

- determining when compulsory schooling begins and ends;
- minimum conditions for issuing diplomas;
- the pension system.

Education is therefore now provided, grant-aided or recognised by each of the three Communities (French, Flemish and German-speaking). In order to ensure their continuous application, the fundamental principles of education have been enshrined in Article 24 of the Constitution as follows:

- Education shall be free; any preventive measure shall be prohibited; punishment for offences shall be governed only by law or decree. The Community shall ensure that parents have freedom of choice. The Community shall provide neutral education. Neutrality shall in particular imply respect for the philosophical, ideological and religious beliefs of parents and pupils.
- If a Community, as the organising authority, wishes to delegate powers to one or more autonomous organisations, it may only do so by decree adopted by a two-thirds majority vote.
- Everyone shall have the right to an education that respects fundamental rights and freedoms. Access to education shall be free of charge until the end of compulsory schooling. All pupils who are subject to compulsory schooling shall be entitled to courses in ethics or religious education at the Community's expense.
- All pupils and students, parents, members of staff and educational institutions shall be equal before the law or decree. Laws and decrees shall take into account the objective differences that justify appropriate treatment, in particular the characteristics specific to each organising authority.
- The provision, recognition and grant-aiding of education by the Community shall be governed by law or decree.

The provision and management of education have therefore been devolved to the Communities which now have the opportunity of developing their own education policies in complete independence.

The general principle for funding the Communities and regions has been laid down in a special Act (16 January 1989) defining sources of funding and methods for calculating and changing the amounts. The principle adopted for the regions is based on income tax distribution. Furthermore, the Act allows them the possibility of raising their own taxes. Funding for the Communities themselves comes from the transfer of revenue from federal and non-fiscal receipts as well as loans. Finally, the special Act establishes the financial responsibility of the Communities which are now required to use their own resources without having recourse to supplementary financing.

The estimates of the budgets to be transferred to the Communities were established in 1988, having taken into account all expenditure relating to the former federal powers to be devolved (primarily education).

The funds earmarked for the Communities do not include past costs and university education provided to foreign students which are both paid for out of the federal budget.

For matters traditionally managed by the Communities since 1980 (culture, health, aid for individuals), funding comes from:

- a share of income tax levied in the linguistic region concerned, supplemented by a portion of this tax levied in the Brussels-Capital Region, equivalent to 20% for the Flemish Community and 80% for the French Community;
- the share of revenue from radio and television licence fees levied according to the same principle and the same ratio of distribution for the Brussels-Capital Region.

When education was officially transferred to the Communities in 1989, a percentage of the overall receipts from VAT, calculated in line with 1988 education spending, was made available to them in addition to the two sources of financing which had already been devolved to them (income tax and revenue from radio and television licence fees for the areas already transferred).

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The amount of the VAT thus transferred is then adapted for the Flemish and French Communities in accordance with a demographic coefficient (the number of young people aged between 0 and 18 in each Community). Furthermore, the three major sources of financing are adapted in line with fluctuations in the average consumer price index.

In parallel to these two adjustment criteria, the amounts allocated to the Communities are subject to a gradual transition over a ten-year period (until 1999) so that by the end of this period the ratio of VAT revenue distribution adopted in 1989 of 56.22% for the Flemish Community and 43.78% for the French Community will correspond to the real proportion of the population under 18 years of age in each Community.

In the year 2000, funding will therefore rely on two local sources of revenue (licence fees and income tax, with the latter reflecting real wealth) and on a distribution of total VAT income strictly in accordance with the number of young people aged between 0 and 18 in each Community. Funding for the Communities will continue to be supplemented by loans, subject to certain conditions.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

For several years now there has been a general trend for the French Community to give greater autonomy to schools.

3.1. PARTICIPATION COUNCILS *(CONSEILS DE PARTICIPATION)*

Having developed a policy which set out the conditions for independent and responsible management by the educational institutions themselves, the decree of 9 November 1990 instigated a series of measures including the participation in *Conseils de participation* of members of the educational community in schools belonging to the French Community network. It is not the aim of these Councils to address the everyday practicalities of running schools, but to debate fundamental options in specific areas in order to develop an educational approach that is motivating, dynamic and forward-looking, and thereby further the process of achieving decentralisation and greater autonomy.

Conseils de participation were made mandatory as from 1991 and cover all levels of compulsory schooling, including further and adult education centres (*enseignement de promotion sociale*), boarding schools and residential homes.

Their tasks are diverse but in particular they put forward proposals and give advice on the pedagogical organisation of the institution (drawing up and implementing the education plan specific to the school, the range of study options and orientations, participation in out-of-school activities, arranging support for pupils in difficulty, etc.), as well as its material and administrative organisation (conversion and improvement of school premises, harmonisation of social activities, etc.). Furthermore the *conseils* are kept informed of the use of the revenue funds allocated to the institution and of pedagogical experiments in progress. They help to organise out-of-school and extra-curricular events and are associated with operations to promote the school.

Each *conseil* is comprised of *ex officio* members (the school head, the director of the psycho-medico-social centre, etc.), members elected by their peers (teachers, administrative staff and pupils), members delegated by their organisation or association (trade union organisation, parents' association, etc.) and external representatives from the communal council of the area where the school is situated.

By the start of the 1993 school year, over 93% of schools in the network had set up *a Conseil de participation.*

3.2. AREA COUNCILS *(CONSEILS DE ZONE)*

Conseils de zone were set up at the beginning of the 1992 school year within the context of the OECD recommendations and as part of a bid to rationalise educational provision. They became fully operational in 1993. In the French Community, 10 geographical zones were defined for secondary education and 12 for "basic education"; these include all schools in all the education networks. By grouping together for consultation all the educational institutions of all the networks in each geographical area, these *conseils* pursue the dual aim of avoiding competition between schools to provide education and to reduce previous levels of over-diversification – whereby 6,000 courses or options were offered involving between one and five pupils – which made the system both costly and difficult to control.

In the past, options were planned exclusively by each organising authority. New options are now planned after consultation between establishments of the same type (i.e. between neutral or non-denominational schools and denominational schools) before being subject to consultation at area level. These consultations are held each year in the spring in order to obtain final decisions after negotiations at the end of the school year, which allows options to be established in time for the start of the following school year.

Furthermore, organising the education system into areas is in line with the objective of decentralised decision-making. Starting with the 1992/93 school year, *Conseils de zones* have been taking decisions regarding "basic" and secondary education on matters of curricular development and in-service training. For education in the French Community, decentralisation is also applied to the reappointment or reassignment of teaching staff.

4. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

4.1. EXTENDING COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

When the Act on raising the school leaving age to 18 was adopted in June 1983, not only was it the result of very lengthy debate but above all it was seen by its advocates as a sign of hope – "the hope of greater continuity between primary and secondary schooling, the hope of better basic training for young people, the hope of proper social integration for those who are currently the rejects of the education system, the hope that part-time compulsory schooling will provide a better preparation for working life by taking charge of young people confronted by socio-economic realities in other respects, and finally, the hope of socio-cultural progress for all young people, many of whom drop out of full-time education at age 14, 15, 16 or 17, often without having had their secondary schooling accredited by any qualification."
(A. Liénard, *Libre Belgique*, 15 November 1983).

Now, over ten years later, even though the Act has failed to live up to all of its expectations, it is necessary to stress its importance and the dominant role it has played in the process of reform which was implemented following its adoption.

At the structural level, when pupils reach the age of 15 to 16 years, extending the period of compulsory schooling may take the form of part-time education. This provision has led to a revival in apprenticeship-linked training and the setting up of part-time education centres (CEHR – *centres d'enseignement à horaire réduit)*, now known as education and alternating training centres (CEFA – *centres d'éducation et de formation en alternance)*. These centres, which are integrated into secondary schools, offer flexible training opportunities that combine theoretical courses with practical exercises and training placements.

4.2. TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Vocational education benefited from the provisions of the Royal Decree of 29 June 1984 relating to the organisation of secondary education which has ended its isolation by creating links with technical education and, under certain conditions, allowing pupils in vocational education to obtain the same qualifications as those in general or technical education.

This strategy also included initiatives to streamline the number of options (from 450 to 150) in technical and vocational education in a bid to raise the general level of education whilst simultaneously providing pupils with a qualification that is more in tune with the realities of economic life. The development of relations between schools and industry also forms part of the same aim.

1993 saw the adoption of a Charter for Alternating Training *(Charte de l'enseignement en alternance)* which pursues the following objectives:

- to help young people prepare their own personal and career plans;
- to reinforce and update their knowledge and know-how;
- to familiarise them with their future socio-occupational environment;
- to ensure they acquire a recognised qualification;
- to facilitate their entry into working life.

The originality of this type of education lies in the training partnership between the school and the firm in their dual mission of education and vocational training. With this aim in mind, the school and the firm participate closely in the pupil's training by means of a joint training project which must be defined in accordance with the established profiles for groups of occupations.

The Charter for Alternating Training expresses the joint determination of the educational world and the trade unions of Wallonia and Brussels to introduce alternating training gradually (19 schools offered alternating training in 1993) in mid-stream during stage three of secondary education. The school remains in charge of the training and the young people retain their pupil status. The firm itself agrees to integrate them into real work situations and undertakes to appoint qualified instructors who must work in close co-operation with school teachers. The teacher and instructor become the prime movers of the apprenticeship for the induction process and for determining which tasks to use, as well as for follow-up and pupil assessment.

4.3. PROMOTING A "SCHOOL FOR SUCCESS"

In parallel with this movement to reform technical and vocational education and to establish a part-time education system, a general debate concerning the high number of pupils falling behind their age-group at school has led the authorities to develop an education system based on cycles, to set up a procedure for defining core skills (see point 5 above) and to harmonise school timetables in secondary education.

There will be a gradual transition to a system organised into cycles of two or more years throughout "basic" and secondary education. Between now and the year 2000, all nursery and primary schools are required to set up such a system. This approach should enable each child:

- to progress in school in a continuous manner at his/her own pace from nursery school entry to the end of the second year of primary;
- to accomplish vital learning processes during this period with reference to certain core skills that have been defined after consultation with the organising authorities, putting into practice the notion of a "level of studies".

Starting in the year 2005, all primary schools must have extended this system from the third to the sixth years of primary education. This schedule of reform was approved by all the organising authorities which signed an agreement to promote a "school for success".

A pilot scheme of two-year cycles was carried out during the 1993/94 school year in lower secondary education. One hundred schools volunteered for this pilot scheme. The system was extended to all schools on 1 September 1994. The objectives of this new method of organisation are:

- to allow a maximum number of pupils to achieve their full potential by taking into account their pace of learning during the fundamental period of transition towards secondary school, this transition representing a critical period of adjustment for a large number of pupils;
- to foster a success-based choice among the various branches of secondary education, in particular the technical branch, rather than providing failure-based guidance.

Thus pupils will be continuously assessed during the two years of the first stage of secondary education. It is only at the end of the first stage that a decision is taken regarding the pupil's success or failure.

In parallel with this method of organisation into stages, a procedure is being set up to harmonise school timetables in general secondary education among all schools, irrespective of the network to which they belong. The objectives of this measure are:

- to put a stop to the futile rivalry between establishments which have been induced to compete with each other by overloading school timetables in order to appeal to families, as such overloading has not guaranteed quality;
- to ensure more comprehensive education during the second stage in order to allow pupils to make a considered choice;
- to update training and gear it to success in higher education, as many university teachers, especially in faculties receiving pupils who have followed very demanding courses such as advanced mathematics or the Classics, believe that pupils taking their first year examinations at university often exhibit serious shortcomings in their ability to analyse and summarise, as well as in team working.

By way of example, the new common timetables for the third stage have been prepared to focus on:

- language and literature subject areas;
- scientific subject areas;
- a balance between literary and scientific education;
- Latin and mathematics;
- a balance between academic and physical education.

All of these measures are intended to further the drive to reduce school failure and to instil in all pupils basic knowledge, analytical skills and the ability to summarise. The five core objectives of this drive are to:

- accord primary importance, in **all** courses, to the progress of all pupils in mastering the French language;
- foster inter-disciplinary studies as part of the pupil's overall education (knowledge, analytical skills, working methods, etc.);
- ensure a better transition between "basic" education and secondary education;

- organise assessment on the basis of skills already acquired or being acquired, rather than on specific course content;
- make available to teachers those tools which permit pupil evaluation not in relation to the average of pupils in a specific class, but to references common to all schools.

4.4. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL TIME

With respect to defining the new method of organising school time and the new timetable, a gradual reform is under way involving all the various components of the education sector (organising authorities, teachers, parents, etc.). Its objective is to achieve a better balance between periods of holiday and periods of work.

5. CURRICULUM

The new method of organisation into two-year stages, which for the first cycle of secondary education has been applied generally throughout the system as from the 1993/94 school year, is leading to a rethink about school curricula within the context of core skills. Indeed, this reform breaks with a well-established tradition in Belgium of end-of-year examinations, the results of which determine whether or not the pupil moves up to the next class. A new assessment system is being set up in order to allow all pupils to progress at their own pace and in keeping with their abilities.

A formative assessment is made throughout the cycle focusing on each pupil's individual progress. At the end of the stage, a summative assessment is made to verify that pupils have acquired the requisite core skills to enable them to move up to the next class with the maximum chances of success. Using this structure, a better transition is achieved from "basic education" to secondary education, whilst allowing for balanced progress that respects the needs of all pupils. Core skills are therefore at the heart of every assessment. They have been jointly defined for all the networks in the following three phases:

- A preliminary document was drawn up and disseminated to the one hundred schools taking part in the reform in 1992, as well as to inspectors, parents' associations and all those who requested a copy.
- Reactions of teachers involved in the reform were gathered and analysed, leading to a redraft of the basic document which has served as a reference for all schools since the beginning of the 1993/94 school year.
- Further reactions emanating from all schools until 1995 helped to prepare a final document.

6. TEACHING STAFF

6.1. INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

6.1.1. HIGHER TEACHER TRAINING

In the French Community, initial training for teachers is mainly provided by higher teacher training institutes (IESP – *instituts d'enseignement supérieur pédagogique)* and by universities.

Since the 1984/85 academic year, the duration of teacher training has been extended from two to three years for pre-school (nursery) education, primary and lower secondary (first stage) levels, leading to the qualification of:

- nursery teacher;
- primary school teacher;
- qualified lower secondary school teacher (AESI – *agrégé de l'enseignement secondaire inférieur)* in relation to a specialisation (French/History, French/Ethics, Dutch/English, Dutch/German, English/German, Mathematics/Physics, Mathematics/Economic Sciences, Mathematics/Ethics, Physics/Chemistry/Biology, Geography/Chemistry/Biology, Geography/History/Social and Economic Sciences, Physical Education/Sports and Leisure, and Plastic Arts);
- special education teacher.

The training is divided into three major branches which includes a general education branch for all IESP students, a second branch focused on scientific training established in line with the chosen educational category, and a third on teaching practice primarily involving training placements. The aim of the general education is to develop logical thinking, provide students with a better understanding of the institutional structures in European Union countries, the mechanisms of society and the ins and outs of economic life, and impart information about the various manifestations of cultural life, new technologies and audio-visual techniques.

Scientific and specialised training focuses more on acquiring a mastery of the discipline which the future teacher will be required to teach. It also includes courses in educational psychology, methodology and general and specialised didactics. This part of the training is used to reinforce the subjects underpinning the activities of pre-school teachers or which figure in the primary education programme, particularly the two fundamental disciplines of French and Mathematics. Vocational training, adapted to each specific branch of study, can lead to other levels and types of teaching (in particular, special education and further/adult education courses). It is currently possible for periods of teaching practice to be distributed throughout the three years of study, although they mainly take place during the third year. Each institute is free to choose how it distributes course periods and teaching practice, although it must ensure that the latter does not exceed three weeks during the first year, that periods range between four and six weeks during the second year and do not exceed 12 weeks during the third year. The total duration of teaching practice over the full teacher training course is 18 weeks.

The full training course must be completed by the presentation of an end-of-course project that constitutes a practical introduction to research in the field of education.

Within this general framework, the current trend is to step up flexible practices that enable each educational institution to develop its own individual training plan and philosophy with the maximum autonomy, thereby creating greater opportunities to introduce complementary activities (visits to places of interest, monuments, museums, exploration of the natural environment, foreign exchanges, language courses, etc.) and training to respond to new expectations (the media, health and safety, intercultural education, the arts, social analysis, new technologies, the identification and resolution of problems of abuse, European citizenship, consumer rights, human relations problems, working methods, etc.).

Pending the forthcoming reform of the entire non-university higher education system, a change-over to two semesters during the third year has already been introduced as of the 1993/94 academic year. Organising the year in this way offers various advantages, including the possibility of grouping courses into certain periods of the year and concentrating practical exercises and teaching practice into other periods.

The teacher training provided by universities leads to a qualification as a teacher of upper secondary education (*agrégation de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur* – AESS) aimed at future upper secondary education teachers and which may be obtained without further study (i.e. jointly with the university degree that accredits the theoretical training). The examination leading to the qualification of upper secondary education teacher focuses on experimental education, the history of education, and general and special methodology. Furthermore, candidates must present two public lessons on topics assigned in advance by the examining board and chosen from the curriculum for upper secondary schools. Within the context of their new-found academic freedom, some universities have taken, or are taking, initiatives to reinforce training in educational psychology and teaching practice for student teachers.

6.2. IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

The reform of both "basic" and secondary education, the extension of schooling on a part-time basis, the promotion of intercultural education, literacy, information, and the introduction of new technologies into vocational training have all sharply increased the demand for in-service teacher training.

The number of study days, seminars and colloquia, as well as of meetings devoted to curricular planning, research, assessment and so forth, has also increased, although this has not necessarily kept pace with growing demand and has been done in line with organisational principles that are becoming more obsolete with each passing year.

Until a few years ago, in-service training was organised spontaneously by the three education networks. The in-service training courses were therefore paid for either directly out of the French Community's budget for its own network or from private funds for the other networks.

In 1987, there was a first experiment in workplace retraining aimed primarily at teachers of technical and practical vocational courses and entirely paid for out of the central budget for all teachers throughout all the networks.

More recently, two decrees, adopted by the Council of the French Community, were introduced to regulate the method of organisation and financing for in-service training across the networks:

- The aim of the Decree of 24 December 1990 relating to in-service and continuing training for members of staff in regular "basic" education (nursery and primary), special education (nursery, primary and secondary) and in psycho-medico-social centres was to promote:
  - scientific knowledge as well as the mastery of occupational techniques and vocational practice;
  - mastery of general pedagogy and methodology;
  - training in interpersonal relations.
- The aims of the Decree of 16 July 1993 relating to in-service training for members of staff in mainstream secondary schools, in the 1994/95 school year, were to address the following themes:
  - training in the implementation of apprenticeships based on core skills and the practice of formative and summative assessment during the first stage of secondary school;
  - developing indicative, formative and summative assessment tools and disseminating them;
  - training in formative assessment at all stages and throughout all the forms and types of secondary education;
  - training of teachers in charge of technology-based education courses, in particular their contribution to the acquisition of multiple skills;
  - training in assessing and updating the knowledge of teachers in charge of technical and vocational practice courses;
  - training in communication, in making allowances for differences, in negotiation and conflict management;
  - training for school heads in human resource management;
  - training for educators in dealing with various aspects of their job.

In no way does the regulatory framework for continuing training laid down in these two decrees preclude other in-service training activities organised and supported within each network.

However, the two decrees have the merit of clarifying the key issues involved in in-service training, encompassing it within the initiative to promote a "school for success" and providing major financial support for achieving this goal.

However, in the French Community, participation in these training activities is on a voluntary basis. Teachers may benefit from such activities as soon as they take up their duties, regardless of whether they are on a temporary or permanent contract, provided they have received the approval of their hierarchical superiors (school management, inspectorate).

As yet no generalised assessment procedure has been set up, with the exception of the training referred to in the Decree of 24 December 1990 for subsidised education which provides for a dual assessment procedure to be carried out by the inspectorate as regards pedagogical aspects and by the audit services as regards participation and the use of budget allocations.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

Various initiatives aimed at compensating for inequalities have been regularly introduced into the education system of the French Community. In recent years increased resources have been allocated to the introduction of intercultural education. 1989 saw the creation of priority education areas (ZEP – *zones d'éducation prioritaires)* and more recently the participation of the Ministry in the initiatives undertaken in the priority action areas (ZAP – *zones d'action prioritaires)*, as well as the creation of the post of mediator in schools which have a reputation for being difficult.

7.1. INTRODUCTION OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

7.1.1. BACKGROUND

The work carried out between 1988 and 1992 by the Royal Commission on Immigration Policy *(Commissariat Royal à la Politique des Immigrés)* is unequivocal. After determining that the foreign population is here to stay, the *Commissariat* arrived at the conclusion that the only way to ensure the harmonious co-existence of immigrants with the Belgian population is through integration. The integration policy was adopted by the inter-ministerial conference on immigration policy *(Conférence Interministérielle de la Politique de l'Immigration)*, comprised of representatives from the federal government and from the governments of the Communities and the Regions.

For its part, the government of the French Community is striving to put the integration policy into practice in all fields which come within its jurisdiction. It advocates intercultural education in schools.

7.1.2. CHARACTERISTICS

It is necessary to dispel the confusion that exists over the use of similar terms in French which sometimes lead to absurd practices. The terms *"multiculturel"* and *"pluriculturel"* (multicultural) merely describe the social units within which groups or individuals from various cultures live together. However, the term "intercultural" characterises a bilateral dynamic that is entered into by partners who are conscious of their interdependence. The more rarely-used term *"transculturel"* (cross-cultural) describes the unilateral process of passing from one cultural state to another.

In the French Community of Belgium, as in all countries where there is immigration, raising awareness of the multicultural nature of society is a slow and gradual process. For many, it is only a question of having resigned themselves to the fact.

Our principal educational aims are to develop a sense of independence, community, responsibility and curiosity together with an inquiring mind. However, as a result of their rules and regulations, timetables and curricula, schools more often than not limit themselves to guiding all individuals towards the standard cultural norm of the majority. It is the legacy of a system founded on the simple alternative of assimilation or rejection.

Intercultural education, centred on the interests and needs of the learner, has taken root in the great diversity of influences facing us today. It is part of a humanist endeavour to sweep away all the various barriers which stand between human beings and to approach all knowledge and opinions from a pluralist viewpoint. Thus the fear frequently aroused by the unknown gives way to dialogue and understanding.

Intercultural education cannot be taught. It is not some new course that can be added to existing disciplines, but a determination to approach every discipline across the board by transcending the ethnocentrism in each and every one of us.

7.1.3. CURRENT SITUATION

Intercultural education is being developed mainly within "basic education". The aim of integrating a large number of teachers of the language and culture from the embassies (Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal and Turkey) into the educational plan of schools through bilateral cultural agreements is to replace what can be rather "segregationist" courses in the language of origin with a more genuine educational and social integration of these young foreigners. Some 70 nursery/primary schools and three secondary schools in Brussels and Wallonia are currently participating in this project. The absence of foreign staff has not prevented numerous other schools from educating their pupils in an intercultural perspective.

In-service training in the intercultural approach and communication is being provided systematically in accordance with a multi-annual programme. It takes place within the schools themselves and concerns all staff members. In order to make initial training effective, in-service training is also offered to teachers of all disciplines in the higher teacher training institutes.

7.2. EDUCATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS *(ZONES D'ÉDUCATION PRIORITAIRES* – ZEP)

Educational priority areas were set up as part of an experimental project following preparatory work by a commission set up in 1988 to consider the criteria which could give rise to ZEPs.

This commission was comprised of representatives from the organising authorities, recognised trade union organisations, the *Fédération des Entreprises de Belgique* (Belgian business federation), the *Fondation Roi Baudouin* (a charitable foundation), universities, parents' associations and psycho-medico-social centres.

In 1989 local projects were selected involving both "basic education" and secondary education schools. Organised in areas where young people are particularly marginalised, ZEPs aim to:

- promote school success through an on-going policy to prevent school failure;
- integrate their projects into a socio-economic environment where school failure and drop-out rates are high, in collaboration with partners external to the school;
- open up educational practices to the pupils' socio-cultural environment.

7.3. PRIORITY ACTION AREAS *(ZONES D'ACTION PRIORITAIRES* – ZAP)

Set up within the framework of activities supported by the *Fonds d'impulsion pour la politique des immigrés* (FIPI – fund for promoting immigration policy), priority action areas (ZAPs) have led to the development of specific educational initiatives.

In "basic education", these included 23 projects for welcoming immigrant mothers into nursery school with the dual objective of bringing together the worlds of school and family, using an intercultural approach and raising the mothers' awareness of the importance of nursery school in a bid to encourage their children's regular attendance.

Another project involved French as a second language and aimed to inform nursery and lower primary school teachers of the importance of a methodology tailored to children who are not of French mother tongue.

In secondary education, there was a project to help improve relations during the third year of vocational training and another to combat truancy for which 27 part-time educational social workers received special training in order to instruct their teaching colleagues in appropriate methods of welcoming and interacting with immigrant pupils. As part of this second project, 14 school mediators were assigned to 14 schools in the Brussels-Capital Region.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

In line with the efforts of the government of the French Community to develop policy guidelines for the education system, a steering unit for mainstream compulsory education was set up. It includes general inspectors, university teachers of education and officials from the ministry's statistical service.

Three initiatives have been undertaken:

- Primary education – standardised external test

  The unit has drawn up a standardised assessment test for all fifth year primary classes which was to be taken in October 1994. This is to test mother tongue and mathematics skills. Its aim is to measure the skills acquired by pupils at the beginning of the fifth year in relation to the skills required by the end of the stage, in order to permit teachers to assess their pupils' level of achievement, judge how much progress they need to make and adapt their teaching approach accordingly. It is therefore a diagnostic test for the purposes of formative assessment.
- Secondary education – organisation into stages, first stage

  A dual survey is being conducted to support the start-up of the reform organising education into stages, one by means of a questionnaire and the other using case studies. The aim of these surveys is to gather information in schools concerning implementation of the reform, the manner in which schools are carrying out assessment, the needs felt by teachers and what appear to be the necessary ingredients for successfully introducing the reform. The information collected was to be made available to schools in time for the general introduction of the reform in 1994/95.
- Dissemination and use of research results

  The long-term objective is to make educational research results available to all teachers. The first phase is to prepare dossiers for school inspectors. These dossiers include summary notes on studies and research (especially Eurydice network publications), bibliographical notes, etc.

BELGIUM (FLEMISH COMMUNITY)

1. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

1.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1.1. FEDERALISATION OF EDUCATION

Following the review of the Constitution in 1988/89, responsibility for educational matters was transferred from the national state to the Communities (the Flemish, French and German-language Communities), with the exception of three policy areas (regulation of pension schemes, the beginning and ending of compulsory education, and minimum requirements for educational qualifications) (Article 127, paras. 1 and 2 of the coordinated Constitution of 17 February 1994).

1.1.2. AUTONOMY OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

In the Flemish Community, the new Independent Council for Community Education (ARGO) took over the role of education authority for the Community in relation to education organised by the Community (Decree of 19 December 1988 concerning the Independent Council for Community Education, Official Gazette 29.12.1988).

The private schools coming under private providers *(inrichtende macht)* have always had considerable autonomy.

Higher education had its autonomy extended by the Decree of 22 February 1995.

1.1.3. EQUAL FINANCING

The various education systems were given more equal treatment in terms of financing, that is, as regards revenue expenditure, investment in school construction and social benefits for schoolchildren.

1.1.4. DEREGULATION

Legal deregulation schemes were given more equal treatment in terms of financing, that is, as regards revenue expenditure, investment in school construction and social benefits for schoolchildren.

There was also a degree of political deregulation in the form of a reduction in the number of rules defining the content of education, the decentralisation of responsibility for education to the local school councils *(lokale raden)* in the case of Community education and to participation councils *(participatieraad)* in the case of grant-aided education.

1.1.5. SCHOOL AUTONOMY

Individual schools gained greater independence in managing their own affairs, coupled with a restructuring of supervision and assistance activities. In the case of primary and secondary education, this meant putting into operation the new Community Schools Inspection Service, the Educational Development Service and the educational support services on the one hand, and progressively introducing a uniform structure divided in four branches in secondary education on the other.

1.1.6. POLICY ADVICE

The Decree of 31 July 1990 established a Flemish Education Council *(VLOR – Vlaamse Onderwijsraad)*. This consists of one overall council and further individual councils and actions which can be established for each level of education. The VLOR has an advisory role and also has the right to initiate studies and scientific research relating to education.

1.2. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

The devolution of responsibility for educational matters to Community level made it possible to redistribute decision-making and administrative responsibilities. This led to the establishment on 1 January 1989 of the Independent Council for Community Education (ARGO) as the education authority in the Community. The ARGO operates according to the following principles:

- democratisation:

  effective co-management and co-decision-making rights for users of education (parents, students, third parties), providers of education (administrations) and those delivering education (teachers);
- decentralisation:

  each school council *(lokale raad)* or board of directors (a part of the ARGO) is part of the education authority and has a large number of responsibilities;
- devolution of responsibility:

  the government devolves a large proportion of its responsibility to local consumers of education.

The decision-making process takes place both at centralised level (the Central Board of the ARGO) and at local level (individual school councils and boards of directors).

The Central Board is the highest administrative body within the education authority of Community education. It is responsible for general administration, which covers the management of educational establishments, advisory bodies, educational responsibility for general teaching policy, such as the drawing-up of syllabuses and the programming of study specialisation.

The Central Board is also responsible for personnel policy, advanced vocational education and continuing training. At the financial level, the Central Board is obliged to compile an annual draft budget and to manage the income and expenditure of the ARGO, the land and buildings, financial reserves, and working capital under its jurisdiction. This responsibility also includes exercising financial supervision over local school councils.

The school councils and boards of directors are responsible for the day-to-day management of Community education. They are responsible for the local organisation of establishments and the management of the budgets allocated to them. They are also responsible for the temporary appointment of teaching staff and for the recruitment of administrative personnel. They nominate candidates to fill vacant posts. The school head is the school's managing director on the school council or board of directors. He or she is given very wide authority as a coordinator and initiator in consultation with the school council or local board of directors.

The Decree of 23 October 1991 (Official Gazette 14.11.1991) established a participation scheme for grant-aided education through the creation of participation councils. In contrast to Community education, where the members of the local school council (i.e. representatives of parents, staff and local community in addition to delegates from the education authority) are full directors, in grant-aided education participation councils the representatives, in principle, have only a consultative role.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

2.1. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The Act of 19 May 1914 established compulsory education from the ages of 6 to 14 years. This was later amended by an Act of 29 June 1983 (Official Gazette 6.7.1983). In order to prepare children sufficiently for an active life in contemporary society, the period of compulsory education was brought to age 18. This subsequent Act contained the following provisions:

- compulsory education begins at the start of the school year in which the child's sixth birthday falls. Similarly, it is important to state that it continues to the end of the school year in which the child's 18th birthday falls;
- full-time compulsory education continues until the age of 18.

No additions or alterations were needed in the existing school structure to meet the new requirements for full-time compulsory education. It was, however, necessary to define how the conditions for compulsory part-time education are satisfied, i.e. if:

- the pupil continues in full-time secondary education;
- the pupil follows a part-time (vocational) secondary education course at a centre for part-time education (CDO). In principle, pupils attend classes for 15 hours a week, and can spend the rest of the time acquiring experience in a particular trade. On-the-job training or apprenticeship agreements are concluded, and some youngsters work in their own family firm;
- the pupil follows a form of training which is a recognised option for meeting compulsory part-time education requirements, such as a recognised training scheme for running a small business.

2.2. UNIFORM STRUCTURE

Before 1989, there were two parallel types of secondary education:

- type I: "renewed" secondary education, which was introduced in 1971 and was organised on comprehensive lines for 12- to 18-year-olds;
- type II: traditional education, offering a choice between Latin, modern languages and technical or vocational options.

The essential differences between type I and type II secondary education are in terms of organisation (one being organised in three stages and the other in two stages) and the fact that all pupils in the first stage of type I education follow a common core curriculum, their choices of subjects being deferred till the second stage, as opposed to what happens in type II secondary education.

The coexistence of these two types of education led to divergence and polarisation.

On 1 September 1989, a gradual start was therefore made on establishing a predominantly comprehensive structure but with a weakening of the common form of the first two years and organisation of the more senior years along more traditional lines, according to type II. This led to a classification of secondary education into three stages, each of two school years, supplemented, if necessary, by optional fifth and seventh school years at the end of the second and third stages respectively (Decree of 31 July 1990, Official Gazette 18.8.1990).

3. CURRICULUM

The Decree of 31 July 1990 concerning inspections and educational support services (Official Gazette 18.8.1990) specified that each education authority (school administration) is free to decide the timetables and syllabuses of its own educational establishments, and to choose its own teaching methods. In 1990, the names of specialised courses of study were standardised.

The Decree of 5 July 1989 on the organisation of secondary education (Official Gazette 25.8.1989) also listed the compulsory subjects which must be included in the timetables of each education system. It also sets out integrated timetables of lessons specifying the minimum number of hours to be spent on each subject per level.

As far as courses and timetables are concerned, the decree imposes a "foundation education" in practically all years of the unified structure.

This foundation consists of a series of subjects obligatory for all pupils. It is only in the years of the first stage that the weekly number of course hours devoted to it may not be less than a specified minimum. Subsequently, there is no minimum per subject.

The Flemish Community Education Ministry sets reference timetables called *synthese lessentabellen*, indicating the minimum number of lessons per subject. Schools which use these obtain automatic recognition, but there is nothing to prevent an organising body from choosing another programme and still obtaining the authority's approval to it.

As far as the syllabus is concerned, i.e. the content of the courses, the organising bodies are free to take such initiatives as they see fit, in the knowledge however that the Community reserves the right not to approve it in the last resort.

4. TEACHING STAFF

In 1985, in the context of a five-year plan to introduce the new information technologies into education, a media and computing course was incorporated into the three-year teacher training courses organised in the teacher training college.

Since 1983, teachers of technical and vocational subjects have been able to attend two, four or six-month supplementary training projects in which they take part in a traineeship in a company or institution. This approach has since expanded into the setting up of a number of annual training projects for teachers in primary, secondary and higher education.

Refresher courses can be spread over one or more school years. A number of teachers are temporarily relieved of their teaching duties to act as trainers, i.e. to pass on the knowledge they have acquired to other teachers. The Decree of 5 July 1989 (Official Gazette 25.8.1989) created an organic framework for the organisation of supplementary training activities.

5. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

Under the *Elkaar Ontmoetend Onderwijs* scheme, schools can bring in foreign teachers to give classes in their own language and culture. Primary schools can set aside additional time for these classes each week during normal class periods. Since the 1982/83 school year, secondary schools have been able to organise special classes in areas where there is a relatively high immigrant population to cater in a responsible way for the children of immigrants and to offer education that is more adapted to their specific needs.

Up to and including the 1983/84 school year, the appointment of a remedial teacher at a school always depended on the number of pupils. Since the 1989/90 school year, the establishment of remedial courses has been encouraged by the allocation of a number of additional classes to remedial teachers.

In full-time secondary education, a school's annual allocation of teaching hours may be used for activities other than teaching (e.g. support teaching, class teachers' meetings, coordination).

6. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Decree of 17 July 1991 concerning inspections and educational support services states that the inspectorate's task is no longer to supervise and assist teachers, but to monitor whether the school as a whole is meeting the minimum quality requirements. The supervision of teachers is not carried out by the inspectorate centrally, but by educational advisors attached to the various education systems. The Educational Development Service (DVO) is a newly-established body, which is responsible for putting forward attainment targets, which are the minimum objectives that the majority of pupils at a particular level of education and engaged in a particular study specialisation should be able to reach.

By a Decree of 17 July 1991, Flemish Education realised a new pedagogical project – Pedagogical Advisory Services for each education sector. They have an advisory and supporting function, but no control function. Control is undertaken by a joint inspection, half of the inspection members coming from official education and the other half from private education. Their results are published every year in a report on the educational situation which is submitted to the Flemish Council.

7. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

See point 6.

DENMARK

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

On 1 January 1990, a set of new administrative regulations for the *folkeskole* (primary and lower secondary education organised in a single structure) came into force. This has first and foremost resulted in changes in the composition and competence of the governing bodies.

The reform formed part of the policy of the government of the time of decentralisation and delegation of competence to the headteachers and school boards at all levels of the education system.

SCOPE OF THE REFORMS

First, the new administrative regulations were to a considerable extent intended as a framework, as opposed to the previous regulations which were linked to a school Act that specified which bodies were obliged to participate in the decision-making phase and who had the competence to decide what.

The second significant difference was that the new regulations were broadly speaking providing for decentralised decision-making, not only from national to municipal authority level but also from municipal authority to the individual school boards.

Whereas the previous regulations were based mainly on strict rules and a broad formalisation of practice, the new regulations were adjusted to their objective. Decision-makers have the prime responsibility for determining the objective and scope of their underlying authority's school policies. The intention is not however to determine in detail how these policies are to be implemented.

Thirdly, influence and responsibility are now concentrated in a few central bodies. Previously many different bodies were required to pronounce or make recommendations on all kinds of matters, resulting often in a protracted decision-making process and an unclear division of competence. In the new regulations, influence is centred in the municipal authority as the overall and financially responsible body, and in the schools' own boards as the common denominator for parents, staff and pupils.

On 1 August 1994, the reform of the *folkeskole* came in force. Its central idea is that the *folkeskole* is to give individual pupils the opportunity to develop as many of their talents as possible. One of the watchwords of the new act is differentiated teaching, i.e. the teaching has as far as possible to be adapted to the individual pupil.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

As already mentioned, the reform of 1990 focused on the aspect of school administration/management. So the following text will be dealing in more detail with the content of the reform in this respect and the specific areas which have been changed through the reform. Finally, the reforms of teachers' training as well as its historical development are presented.

1. ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOLS

1.1. AIM OF THE REFORM

The aim of the reform was to achieve a greater extent of decentralisation and to give greater competence to the school boards of the individual schools, i.e. among other things to strengthen parental influence in the school.

1.2. OUTLINE OF THE REFORM

In principle, the new administrative regulations do not alter the functions of the Ministry of Education with regard to the content of teaching. Within the framework of the act, the Minister issues the principal rules and directives for the conduct of the *folkeskole*, i.e. the framework.

The Ministry of Education is the highest instance of appeal in cases relating to salary and appointment of teachers and also in questions relating to the extensive system of special educational assistance of the *folkeskole*.

The **municipal council** has the overall responsibility for its local authority school system and it determines the objectives and the scope of its school system and the activities of the schools. It is the decision-making instance for its school system's administrative statutes and is therefore the instance that "fills in" the framework as it is laid down in the Act on the *folkeskole*.

One of the most important innovations in the new regulations was the establishment of a **school board** for each school. The school boards are to consist of five or seven parent representatives elected by and from among the parents of children enrolled in the school, two staff representatives elected by and from among teachers and other staff, and two pupil representatives elected by and from among the pupils of the school. In addition, one member of the municipal council may attend the meetings of the board without voting rights.

The municipal council can delegate its power to the school boards. Indeed, the act assumes that this will happen to some extent. The board's increase of influence is highlighted by the fact that the new regulations make no provision for the insertion of any obligatory body between the municipal councils and the school boards.

As hitherto, the **headteacher** has the overall administrative and pedagogical responsibility for the school. The function of the headteacher is in the present regulations strengthened through new powers. The headteacher now makes all decisions affecting the individual pupil. Not less important is the fact that the headteacher must submit proposals to the school board and put into effect the board's policy guidelines.

Pedagogical councils are set up as advisory bodies to the headteachers. They comprise all staff with educational and pedagogical functions at the school. They can pronounce on all pedagogical matters to the board and must do so when requested by the headteacher or the school board.

With the introduction of the new administrative regulations, the local education committees and the teachers' councils ceased to exist. In their place, the municipal councils may establish **joint advisory bodies** for the whole of their local authority school system. If the municipality wishes to establish such advisory bodies, it also determines the composition and functions of these.

As the new administrative regulations can in many ways be characterised as **framework regulations** within which the municipal councils make their own rules and regulations, special statutes must be drawn up for the school system of each municipality.

Complaints procedures have been changed so that the municipal council and the school board are the final instances.

2. REFORM OF THE *FOLKESKOLE* OF 1994

The Act on the *folkeskole* of 1994 lays down the framework of the Danish comprehensive primary and lower secondary school system, which stretches from year 0 (pre-school) to year 10.

The act indicates the structure and organisation. "The *folkeskole* shall comprise a one-year pre-school class, a nine-year basic school and a one-year 10th form... the *folkeskole* is a municipal matter. It shall be the responsibility of the municipal council to ensure all children in the municipality free education in the *folkeskole*. The municipal council shall lay down the targets and framework of the activities of the schools within the provisions of the act". The content of the school: "The content of the teaching shall be selected and organised so that it gives the pupils a possibility of absorption, a general view and a feeling of coherence. The teaching shall enable the pupils to acquire the forms of cognition and working methods of the individual subjects."

It furthermore contains provisions regarding the appointment of teachers, pupils' enrolment in and admission to the school, administration of the municipal school system, expenditure, complaints etc.

2.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES

In section 1 of the Act on the *folkeskole* of 1994, it is laid down that:

"The *folkeskole* shall - in cooperation with the parents - further the pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills, working methods and ways of expressing themselves and thus contribute to the all-round personal development of the individual pupil.

The *folkeskole* shall endeavour to create such opportunities for experience, industry and absorption that the pupils develop awareness, imagination and an urge to learn, so that they acquire confidence in their own possibilities and a background for forming independent judgements and for taking personal action.

The *folkeskole* shall familiarise the pupils with Danish culture and contribute to their understanding of other cultures and of man's interaction with nature. The school shall prepare the pupils for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life must therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy."

2.2. METHODS

According to the Act on the *folkeskole*, "The content of the teaching shall be selected and organised so that it gives the pupils the possibility of absorption, a general view and a feeling of coherence. The teaching shall enable the pupils to acquire the forms of cognition and working methods of the individual subjects. The pupils shall – in an interaction with this – have the opportunity to practise and develop the acquired knowledge and skills through the instruction in interdisciplinary topics and issues."

The organisation of the teaching, including the choice of teaching and working methods, teaching materials and the selection of subject-matter in the individual subjects must live up to the aims set and must be varied so that it corresponds to the needs and prerequisites of the individual pupils. It is up to the headteacher to ensure that the class teacher and other teachers of the class plan and organise the teaching in such a way that it offers challenges to all pupils. In each year and in each subject, the teacher and the pupil cooperate continuously on determining the objectives which they seek to meet. The work of the pupils must be organised under due consideration of the objectives set. The establishment of working methods and the selection of subject-matter is whenever possible taking place in cooperation between teachers and pupils.

The new act has abolished the division into a basic and advanced level and has instead introduced the concept of differentiated teaching, which means that the teaching shall to a greater extent be adapted to the individual pupil. In the 1st to 10th years, the teaching may be organised in groups within the individual class or transversely to classes, where this is practical and pedagogically justified. In the 8th to 10th years, the teaching may furthermore be organised in groups within the individual class and transversely to classes on the basis of a continuous evaluation of the different needs of the pupils. At all form levels, the pupils must be taught together for the major part of the school day.

According to the new act, new information technologies (NIT) must be integrated into the teaching of all subjects at all form levels. This means full integration of NIT into the obligatory subjects, three new optional subjects in connection with NIT and requirements regarding an extension of the NIT-equipment of the schools. The pupils shall be given the possibility of acquiring basic knowledge in the NIT-area. The integration of NIT is written into the new curriculum guidelines by the Ministry of Education as a follow-up to the new Act on the *folkeskole*.

2.3. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The teaching of children, young people and adults is regulated by a number of Acts, and, with one exception, the general provisions on special education are contained in the ordinary Acts applying to the school area in question. The exception is the Act on special education for adults, which since 1980 has been the legal basis for compensatory special education for adults with functional difficulties of a physical or psychological nature; there is however also a ministerial order on special educational support in vocational education and training etc. But otherwise there is no special legislation which applies to pupils with special needs. In the ordinary legislation pertaining to the individual levels of education, it is laid down more or less directly that the teaching must be open to all and thus be organised and executed with due consideration of the pupils' different prerequisites and needs, and there may be provisions regarding special considerations in connection with examinations and the like.

In the *folkeskole*, where compulsory education is a decisive element of the legislative basis, it is laid down very precisely that all children are obliged and therefore also entitled to complete the *folkeskole* or other teaching of a standard which can measure up with that of the *folkeskole*. The Act on the *folkeskole* thus applies to all children of basic school age as well as children who have not yet started school, if they due to a handicap have need of special educational assistance. The aims of the school, the number and scope of the subjects, the organisation of the teaching in class levels, evaluation etc. are thus directed equally at able-bodied pupils and at pupils with severe functional disabilities.

The Act on the *folkeskole* does however contain supplementary provisions on special rights for certain pupils and on possibilities of deviating from some of the provisions in the Act in relation to these pupils. In section 3 of the Act on the *folkeskole*, it is laid down that "Special education and other special educational assistance shall be given to children whose development requires special consideration or support", and it is directly mentioned that these provisions may contain deviations from the subject-range of the school, the provisions of proficiency assessment and the weekly timetable. It is characteristic of section 3 of the Act that there is no indication of any form of objective or categorical delimitation of the group of pupils with special educational needs. The decision as to whether a child's development requires special consideration or support is dependent on a concrete assessment in each individual case, which according to section 12 in the Act shall be made upon pedagogical and psychological counselling and upon consultation of the pupil and the parents. The provisions on special education and other special educational assistance of the Act on the *folkeskole* are elaborated on and amplified in a number of ministerial orders and circular letters as well as in a number of guidelines on the content and organisation of the teaching. The latter are subject to continuous revision. The regulations governing special education mainly deal with the following topics: the pupils, the time of initiating special education and other special educational assistance, the content of the special educational assistance, the different forms of special education, the procedure in relation to referral of pupils to special education and other special educational assistance, special considerations at examinations, transition form school to working life, teacher training etc.

3. TEACHERS

3.1. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR THE *FOLKESKOLE*

3.1.1. TRAINING INSTITUTION

The training of teachers for the basic school has always taken place independent of the universities at a changing number of special teacher training colleges (for the moment, 18).

3.1.2. LEGISLATION

1954 There were two branches with largely the same subject range, with the same competence, but with different admission requirements.

Admission requirement for the 4-year normal branch: Admission examination in a number of subjects, which could be reduced, if the applicant had passed the lower-secondary school leaving examination or an equivalent examination.

Admission to the 3-year "student"-branch: The upper secondary school leaving examination *(Studentereksamen)*.

Subject range: All the subjects taught in school as well as education subjects.

Specialisation in one optional subject (main subject). Compulsory attendance. Examination in certain subjects, other subjects completed by a statement by the college. The entire course completed by a proficiency assessment by the college.

Competence to teach the entire period of compulsory schooling (lst – 10th year levels, i.e. the 7-year school with its examination superstructure, the "middle school"). According to the previous Act, the course only conferred competence to teach in the then 7-year *folkeskole*.

1966 The course becomes more "academic".

Admission requirement: Upper secondary school leaving examination or equivalent examination.

Duration: 3½ years (could be extended to 4 years by the student).

Subject range: educational theory and practice, psychology, professional studies, Danish, mathematics, handwriting, Christian studies, and two of the subjects of creative art, handicraft, physical education and music.

Optional subjects: 2 main subjects and an educational specialisation.

Examination in all subjects. No compulsory attendance.

Competence: the entire 10-year course of schooling of the *folkeskole*.

1985 Duration extended to 4 years for all students.

1991 Builds on the 1966 Act with the following changes:

Divided into two parts, each of 2 years' duration. A strengthening of the optional subjects which together with general didactics take up the second part. New subjects: creative art and handicraft become visual art. Obligatory subject is introduced and abolition of central control of every detail. Extensive local implementation on the basis of framework regulations.

3.2. TRAINING OF TEACHERS FOR THE *FOLKESKOLE* AT THE PRESENT TIME

3.2.1. MUNICIPAL PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL *(FOLKESKOLE)*

At present, teacher training is offered at 18 colleges of education distributed all over Denmark. The colleges are administered by the Ministry of Education and are under ministry supervision both with regard to financing and to the education offered.

The colleges of education are the only institutions which are authorised to provide the 4-year course, which qualifies for teaching posts in the *folkeskole.*

3.2.1.1. DURATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The teacher training course is of 4 years' duration and consists of two parts, each of 2 years' duration. The course includes teaching practice at a school for a total of 20 weeks, the organisation of which is decided by the individual institution.

Part I of the course includes the following subjects: Danish, handwriting, rhetoric, religious education, history/social studies (about 32%), arithmetic, natural science (about 18%), theory of education, psychology (about 20%) and two of the following three subjects: Music, physical education, visual art/design (about 20%) as well as teaching practice (about 10%).

Part II of the course includes the following subjects: two main subjects chosen freely from among all the subjects of the *folkeskole* (about 60%), general didactics and an educational specialisation (about 25%) as well as teaching practice (about 15%).

(The percentages indicate the proportion of a student's full-time work-load devoted to these subjects during each of the two parts of the course).

3.2.1.2. ADMISSION AND STUDENT POPULATION

The admission requirement for the teacher training course is one of the following leaving examinations at upper secondary level: the upper secondary school leaving examination (the *Studentereksamen)***,** the higher preparatory examination *(HF-eksamen),* the higher business examination (HHX) or the higher technical examination (HTX).

Due to the fact that there are normally more applicants than available study places, it has been necessary to introduce restricted admission to these courses.

Of the study places, 25% are awarded on the basis of the leaving examination at upper secondary level. As for the other 75%, it is in principle up to the colleges themselves to decide, but the colleges have agreed on common rules which are administered locally:

- the result of the leaving examination ("the higher, the better");
- practical work experience;
- folk high school attendance;
- stay abroad;
- experience with children (youth centre, Boy Scout movement etc.).

One third of the students are men, two thirds are women. About 65% of the students complete the course at the end of the officially stipulated time of study, and 75% in total complete the course.

3.2.1.3. LEGISLATION

Act No 410 of 6 June 1991 on the training of teachers for the Danish *folkeskole* only indicates the general lines of the course: the duration, subjects, rules regarding the institutions and their management etc.

Ministerial Order No 261 of 15 April 1992 regulates the scope of the subjects, the principal lines of the content of the subjects, and general rules for the assessment of students.

The more detailed regulations are laid down in local curricula drawn up by the institutions.

3.2.1.4. ADMINISTRATION

Each college has a board consisting of 5 to 15 members representing local interests (the municipality, trade unions, folk high schools, municipal primary and lower secondary schools etc.).

The board shall safeguard "the interests of the college as an educational institution and decide on the guidelines for the external work of the college and the development in the long term". The board is furthermore responsible for the running of the college, including the administration of the budget.

The rector is responsible for the day-to-day running of the college, i.e. the teaching and finances of the college. Teachers' and students' councils may be established.

3.2.1.5. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TEACHERS AT THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

The teachers at the colleges of education may have three different kinds of qualifications:

- A university degree (Master's level) in humanities or in natural sciences subjects.
- An academic degree (Master's level) from the Royal Danish School of Educational Studies.
- A *folkeskole* teacher qualification supplemented by in-service training (mostly in non-academic subjects such as needlework, handwriting etc.).

3.2.1.6. FINANCING

The budget is based on the number of active students, i.e. students who pass the prescribed examinations within the officially stipulated time of study. Expenses relating to the teaching, manuals, teaching practice and administration are based on this. Expenses relating to buildings, cleaning, energy/heating and rent are based on the individual circumstances.

About 80% of the budget goes to the payment of salaries, and the remaining 20% covers the operational expenditure. The college can choose to move money from the salary account to the operational expenditure account but not the other way around.

In 1992, the basis for the salary budget was a student/teacher ratio of 10:1. The total costs of one student was DKK 50 000 per year in 1992.

3.2.1.7. COMPETENCE OF DANISH *FOLKESKOLE* TEACHERS

Danish colleges of education offer a course which in scope and level can be said to correspond to certain types of university courses in the English-speaking world. The qualification which students obtain on completion of the course can most aptly be compared to a UK/US Bachelor's degree.

All the colleges are under ministry supervision. The quality of the examinations is controlled by external examiners appointed by the ministry.

In theory, a teacher's certificate qualifies the graduate teacher to teach all subjects to all years (1st to 10th years), but in fact the teacher is generally considered competent to teach in 1st to 10th years in the main subjects taken, and the primary school classes in the core subjects taken.

In practice, the authorities responsible for the appointment of teachers (i.e. the municipalities, including the school board and the headteacher of the individual school) take the final decision with regard to the question of competence. Most teachers teach three or four subjects.

MAIN SOURCES USED

Education in Denmark: Administration of the *Folkeskole*: Danish Ministry of Education, 1991.

GERMANY

1. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

1.1. RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION AND FOR SCHOOL REFORMS AT *LAND* LEVEL

Responsibility for the education system in Germany is determined by the federal structure of the State. Under the Constitution *(Grundgesetz)*, the exercise of state powers and the discharge of state duties is a matter for the *Länder* insofar as the Basic Law does not provide or permit otherwise. The *Länder* thus have the right to enact legislation where the Basic Law does not confer legislative powers on the Federation *(Bund)*. Legislation on, and administration of, the entire education system therefore rest exclusively with the *Länder*.

Under the *Grundgesetz* and the constitutions of the individual *Länder*, the overall education system is the responsibility of the State and is under its oversight. The highest authorities responsible for the supervision and administration of general education and vocational schools are the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the individual *Länder*. These draw up educational policy guidelines, make legal provisions and administrative regulations and exercise control over the lower authorities, the subordinate public bodies, institutions and foundations. To support the ministries in this work, the *Länder* have set up their own educational research institutes. The planning and organization of education, including the **testing, introduction and implementation of educational and organisational reforms is the duty of the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs and the subordinate school administrative authorities at regional and local level**. The organisational competence of the *Länder* involves both the organisation of different types of education, the definition of curricula, qualifications and entitlements and also the administrative supervision of teachers and other education staff. The educational objectives set out in the education statutes for the various types of education are given concrete form in the curricula, which are the responsibility of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the individual *Länder*.

Administration of the school system is generally organised within a three-tier system. The highest tier comprises the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs, the middle tier the school departments of the regional governments or autonomous upper level schools offices *(Oberschulämter)* and the lower tier the schools offices *(Schulämter)* at local, municipal or communal level. In a number of *Länder* and the city states (Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg), school administration is based on a two-tier system, while the city states sometimes have only one tier. In these cases, either the middle or the lower level is omitted.

Private schools are also subject to state supervision which is exercised by the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder*. Recognition of their leaving certificates depends on their complying with relevant state provisions concerning teachers' qualifications and the organisation of education and examinations. The state regulations on private schools take the special educational aims of these schools into account.

1.2. COOPERATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AT SUPRAREGIONAL LEVEL

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany *(Kultusminister Konferenz* or KMK) is the instrument for cooperation between the *Länder* in relation to education; this body according to its rules of procedure, deals with "matters of educational and cultural policy of supraregional importance with a view to reaching a joint position and attending to matters of common interest". Educational and cultural policy is interpreted broadly so as to include the areas of education, science and culture.

The more precise objective is to arrive at and safeguard **concordant regulations in the *Länder*** through resolutions adopted by the Standing Conference. All decisions taken by the Conference must be unanimous and until they have been translated into binding *Land* law by the 16 *Land* parliaments, have the status of recommendations, although the ministers responsible are obliged to support their incorporation into *Land* law. Where the subject-matter of a resolution adopted by the Standing Conference falls within the area of competence of the ministers responsible, the KMK decisions come into effect immediately.

Following unification of the two German states, the new *Länder*, which were constituted on the territory of the former GDR under the Establishment of *Länder* Act of July 1990, joined the Standing Conference in December 1990. To safeguard the individual's basic rights of freedom of choice of occupation and of place of training throughout Germany, this cooperation aims to create a **common and comparable basic structure of education** at school level. The cooperation of the *Länder* in the Standing Conference since 1948 has led to uniform and comparable developments in a wide range of areas.

A 1964 *Länder* convention (the Hamburg Convention), last amended in 1971, guarantees a uniform fundamental structure in education throughout Germany. This convention covers, amongst other things, the commencement and duration of compulsory full-time education, the beginning and end of the school year, the length of holidays, the names of the various educational institutions and their organisational forms, guarantees of transferability between school types, the commencement of foreign language teaching and the sequence in which languages are learned, recognition of school reports and teacher training examinations, as well as the description of the marking system used in school reports and teacher training examinations. In subsequent resolutions, the Standing Conference has agreed on further fundamental common features for the education system and for reciprocal recognition of the leaving qualifications awarded by general education and vocational schools in all *Länder*. Reference is made in Section 2.2 to the resolutions and recommendations of the Standing Conference on the testing of innovations in the *Länder* education systems.

The Federation cooperates in the execution of the duties of the *Länder* in relation to certain joint tasks set out in the Constitution. To further collaboration between the Federation and the *Länder* in the areas of educational planning and promotion of research, the joint *Bund-Länder* Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion was set up as a permanent forum for the discussion of all matters concerning these areas. The responsibility of the joint *Bund-Länder* Commission for the preparation, implementation, evaluation and financing of pilot schemes of supraregional significance in the schools of the *Länder* is explained in greater detail in Section 2.2.

2. PILOT SCHEMES FOR THE PREPARATION OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

Pilot schemes are conducted in the *Länder* to assist the **development of education** and the **testing of new educational and organisational concepts**. This provides an opportunity to gather experience and conduct factual discussions on specific issues at an early stage. Pilot schemes can be carried out in existing schools or experimental schools. They are under professional oversight and are evaluated in relation to the applicability of their results.

2.1. LEGAL FOUNDATION OF PILOT SCHEMES

Pilot schemes require a **statutory basis** as they are at variance with the generally applicable education regulations. This is particularly because pilot schemes frequently affect the basic rights of parents and pupils involved, as regards their impact on the choice of course of education. In particular, whenever pilot schemes introduce far-reaching reforms, they have to remain subject to decisions by the parliaments of the *Länder* on account of the significance of the changes they bring about in the education system. The school legislation of the *Länder* therefore contains fundamental provisions in relation to carrying out pilot schemes in schools. There are also regulations on individual questions such as the financing of pilot schemes, the obligation of the pupils concerned to take part and the professional oversight of the pilot schemes.

2.2. IMPLEMENTATION OF PILOT SCHEMES IN SCHOOLS

The implementation of pilot schemes is, in all the *Länder*, subject to the prior approval of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. They are permitted only where it is guaranteed that the pupils affected can obtain qualifications the same as, or equivalent to, those awarded in other schools. Pilot schemes that depart from the common basic structure of education agreed in the Hamburg Convention must be approved by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs before being implemented.

Parents of the pupils affected must be given prior notification of pilot schemes and these must also be published in the official bulletin of the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The information given must include details of the objectives, content and duration of the pilot scheme and of the final qualifications and entitlements the pupils will be able to obtain.

Pilot schemes are usually introduced under statutory instruments made by the highest education authorities, the Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs. The middle-tier education authorities, such as district administrations and *Oberschulämter*, assist and monitor their introduction and implementation. As a rule, educational back-up and professional supervision are provided by a *Land* institute for educational theory and educational research, which is answerable to its Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The educational back-up provides the pilot scheme with assistance on content (e.g. through curricula, recommendations or materials on educational theory). Those providing professional supervision examine the effectiveness of the reform measures and the conditions for their successful implementation and they develop criteria and recommendations for general application.

The *Land* institutes draw up interim reports and a final report on the educational back-up and professional supervision for their respective Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs. As a rule, recommendations are made for the introduction of the reform throughout the entire school system. The final decision rests with the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. Implementation of the pilot schemes at *Land* level then generally follows by way of ministerial decree which, depending on the significance of the reform, must be based on a corresponding decision of the *Land* parliament.

For pilot schemes of supraregional importance, a procedure has been established in the context of the remit of the joint *Bund-Länder* Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion *(Bund-Länder-Kommission* or BLK) to coordinate the preparation, execution and evaluation of pilot schemes in the education system and secure their financing. The pilot schemes are designed in such a way as to provide the *Länder* with important decision-making assistance for the development of the education system. Current schemes involve the following special areas of development considered particularly important by the *Länder* and the Federation with regard to education policy decision-making and practical implementation:

- vocational education;
- new information and communication technologies in education;
- inclusion of environmental matters in education;
- musical and cultural education;
- differentiated incentives for special groups;
- girls and women in education.

In addition to these special areas of development, "pilot schemes for solving current problems" are conducted on significant and urgent matters of education policy. This enables important current information in the education system to be processed and acted upon through the pilot schemes. Current topics include, for example, media education in school, learning for Europe, opening up the school, and social behaviour inside and outside school.

The pilot schemes are evaluated and documented at supraregional level by the joint *Bund-Länder* Commission.

The results of the school experiments and the pilot schemes in the *Länder* can influence recommendations and decisions made by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and thus provide a basis for reform measures in all *Länder*. The implementation of reforms in an individual *Land* comes under the jurisdiction of its parliament and/or Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. However, where the reform measures would bring about changes in the organisation or content of education which would depart from the basic structure of education agreed between the *Länder* in the Hamburg Convention, consultations first take place amongst the *Länder* in the Standing Conference on the extent to which the school types and final qualifications can be given reciprocal recognition by the *Länder*.

3. INNOVATIONS AND REFORMS IN SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND IN EDUCATION AND TEACHING FROM 1984 TO 1994

3.1. INNOVATIONS AND REFORMS IN ALL *LÄNDER*

Between 1984 and 1994, a series of specific school organisational and educational reforms were introduced in individual *Länder*, which cannot however be described in detail here. This report is confined in the main to reforms that have been introduced in the majority of the *Länder* and which are, as a rule, the subject of agreements, resolutions and recommendations of the Standing Conference. The most important reforms are set out below, in accordance with the thematic structure set out in the questionnaire drawn up by the *Centro de Investigación, Documentación y Evaluación (CIDE)*:

3.1.1. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

3.1.1.1. ALL-DAY CARE FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN

In Germany – in contrast to other European countries – school is traditionally a half-day institution. The introduction of all-day schooling, which was tested in all the *Länder* in the 1970s in the form of pilot schemes, initially met with scepticism in West Germany. It was feared that the state authorities wanted to increasingly extend their influence on the upbringing of children. Care of children outside school hours was regarded as primarily the task of families. A report by the 1993 Standing Conference shows that the attitude of wide sections of the population to all-day provision for school-children has changed in the interim.

The following factors have led to a re-assessment of all-day provision extending beyond school hours and offered by schools or public and private youth service organisations:

- changes in the family structure with increasing numbers of one-child and single-parent families;
- changes in the work situation with a significant increase in the employment of women wishing to combine family and profession/employment and raising children;
- and last but not least, the not very advantageous circumstances in the immediate environment of many children and young people.

Social change calls for a strengthening of educational concepts so that they consciously take account of the altered living conditions of children and young people and remove the conceptual and temporal limitation of education and upbringing to morning classes and instead offer more educationally focused school programmes by extending the time pupils spend in school.

Against this background, the desire for more all-day schooling, fixed times for pupils to remain after school hours and afternoon provision to support the family has increased in West Germany, both for children of primary school age and those at the lower secondary level.

According to the report issued by the Standing Conference, all the *Länder* **extended their extra-curricular care and supervision programmes for pupils** in the 1984-94 period and are continuing this development. However, **all-day schools** are still the **exception** in Germany, and the *Länder* have no plans for an extensive increase in this type of school.

In its report, the Standing Conference refers to **crèches, fixed school opening times and all-day schooling** as educational concepts and organisational forms for the primary level of education in the *Länder*. At present, educational effort is mainly concentrated on closer cooperation between school and crèche in terms of location and content (crèche in or at the school or "pupils' house"). Fixed school opening times (approximately 7.30 a.m. to 1 p.m./2 p.m.) ensure that pupils can also remain in school outside compulsory class times. This is done through a new concept of school and teaching and/or provision made by non-school bodies. Participation in the additional programmes can be voluntary or compulsory.

At lower secondary level, the *Länder* are providing **all-day schools, extended half-day schools and cooperation with youth service and sports organisations**. In all-day schools, timetabled classroom teaching and the additional programmes – work and special tuition times, study groups, supervised leisure, lunch – form a single educational whole. The main difference between extended half-day and all-day schools is that, in the former, timetabled classroom teaching takes place, as far as possible, in the morning and the additional all-day activities complementary to their school work in the afternoon. The extended half-day schools also offer this provision to all pupils, but parents and guardians can choose not to send their children to the all-day activities outside the normal school timetable although they are compulsory. Outside school, there are a large number of public and private youth service bodies as well as cultural and educational institutions and private initiative groups offering school pupils lunch, homework assistance and leisure activities after school hours.

3.1.2. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION

3.1.2.1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE *GESAMTSCHULE* (COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL) AS A STANDARD SCHOOL TYPE

Following the completion of the pilot schemes, the *Gesamtschule* was introduced in the vast majority of the *Länder* as a standard school type alongside the *Hauptschule* (lower secondary), *Realschule* (lower secondary) and *Gymnasium* (lower and upper secondary). The *Gesamtschule* offers several courses which cover the educational content of the other schools in the structured system from the 5th to the 9th or 10th year. The *Gesamtschule* commences in the 7th year, building on the six-year primary school period (as in Berlin and Brandenburg) or on the observation and guidance phase, which is independent of school type.

The ***kooperative*** *Gesamtschule* (cooperative type) and the *Schulzentrum* (a school complex in Bremen) bring the *Hauptschule*, *Realschule* and *Gymnasium* together in one organisational and educational unit. Pupils are streamed according to their intended final qualification (*Hauptschulabschluß* – lower secondary leaving certificate, *Mittlerer Abschluß* – intermediate certificate, entitlement to proceed to *gymnasiale Oberstufe* – senior upper secondary).

The ***integrierte*** *Gesamtschule* (integrated type) constitutes an educational and organisational entity. Some subjects are taught in streamed courses with at least two ability levels which are defined with reference to the curriculum of the course chosen. Differentiated teaching on the basis of different levels of difficulty begins in mathematics and the first foreign language in year 7, in German usually in year 8 or, at the latest, in year 9, and in at least one science subject (physics or chemistry) in year 9 at the latest. In social science subjects, art, music, sport and religious instruction, the teaching is generally common to all pupils.

At the end of years 9 or 10, all lower secondary leaving qualifications can be obtained at the *Gesamtschule*, whether of the cooperative or integrated type.

3.1.2.2. ACQUISITION OF EDUCATIONAL ENTITLEMENTS VIA COURSES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Vocational education represents a substantial component of the German education system. Greater recognition of the important role vocational education plays in society can be expected in the future. Through the formal up-grading of courses of vocational education (generally supplemented by additional courses of general education or greater incorporation of general education content into the occupationally related subjects), the objective is to enable pupils to **acquire an educational entitlement** alongside their vocational qualification. It is hoped that such measures will make vocational education a credible alternative to courses at general education schools in the eyes of parents and young people.

The vast majority of 15- to 20-year-olds in Germany complete a dual vocational education and training course after finishing compulsory full-time education. The reason for the term "dual" is that initial training is carried out at two places of learning, i.e. in the company and in the vocational school, both of which satisfy the educational requirements of the dual initial vocational training system. The training period lasts between 2 and 3½ years, with training for the majority of occupations taking 3 years.

The task of the *Berufsschule* (vocational school) is to provide general and vocational teaching, with special consideration given to the requirements of initial vocational training. It provides basic and specialist vocational education as well as extending the general education already acquired. In this way, the *Berufsschule* seeks to enable pupils to perform their occupational tasks and also to help to organise the work environment and society in a socially and ecologically responsible manner.

The *Berufsschule* is attended by pupils pursuing initial vocational training on the basis of a corresponding apprenticeship or trainee contract with a company or those who have left the *Hauptschule* or another general school after finishing compulsory full-time schooling and are in employment but still obliged to attend vocational school.

Teaching is given on a part-time basis and comprises at least 12 hours per week, though it can also be provided in block courses. Approximately one third of the teaching in the *Berufsschule* is devoted to general education subjects, i.e. German, current affairs/social studies/economics, religious instruction and sport. Foreign language teaching is also taken into account according to its importance for the training course concerned (e.g. office work). The dual initial training period ends with a final examination which tests the student's ability to practise that occupation immediately, thus making subsequent induction and introductory training periods unnecessary.

In the 1991 "Framework agreement on vocational education", the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs provided for the possibility of **the successful completion of vocational education in accordance with the provisions of a particular *Land* also including the *Hauptschule* or the *Realschule* leaving certificate**. The requirements for inter-*Land* recognition of a *Berufsschule* leaving certificate which includes the entitlements of a *Realschule* qualification were established in the June 1992 amendment to the

"Agreement on the *Berufsschule* leaving qualification". These requirements include a particular average mark in the leaving certificate, the successful completion of initial vocational training in a recognised training occupation and proof of foreign language proficiency.

3.1.3. CURRICULA AND COURSE CONTENT

3.1.3.1. NEW FRAMEWORK CURRICULA FOR THE *BERUFSSCHULE*

Between 1984 and 1994, new **framework curricula for vocationally-related teaching in the *Berufsschule*** were introduced for approximately 200 recognised training occupations.

The *Berufsschule* is an autonomous place of learning in the "dual system" of initial vocational training with the task of teaching its pupils general and vocationally related subjects, with special consideration being given to the requirements of vocational training. Teaching in vocational schools comprises a minimum of 12 hours per week, of which 8 are, as a rule, occupation-related. This vocation-related teaching content follows the framework curricula adopted by the Standing Conference.

The framework curricula for occupation-related teaching in the *Berufsschule* and the initial training regulations for out-of-school vocational training in companies under the dual initial training arrangements are drawn up in accordance with an agreed procedure by the Federation and the *Länder* on the basis of the Common Results Protocol *(Gemeinsames Ergebnisprotokoll)* of 30 May 1972.

The *Länder* have either adopted outright the new framework curricula agreed by the Standing Conference for occupation-related teaching in their vocational schools or taken them up appropriately in curricula of their own.

3.1.3.2. DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL AND ARTISTIC EDUCATION

In its recommendation on "school and culture" of November 1985, the Standing Conference underlined the importance of schools for passing on cultural traditions and for cultural development. At the same time, they stressed the role of musical and artistic education which cannot be guaranteed solely by isolated specialist teaching but is also provided in the course of other subjects and school events. The Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* decided to **develop and promote the existing varied activities in the area of musical and artistic education**. This includes, besides guaranteeing special music and art classes, the setting up of more study groups for choral, orchestral and instrumental music, film, photography, drama, puppetry, the plastic arts, literature, etc., the organisation of musical and artistic competitions, the promotion of cooperation between schools and other cultural institutions, an expansion of the education services of cultural institutions and the involvement of artists and representatives of cultural institutions in the work of schools.

3.1.3.3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE *GYMNASIALE OBERSTUFE* (LAST 2-3 YEARS OF THE UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL)

Development of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* was carried out from 1987 on the basis of updating and redrafting the following agreements reached by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs:

- "Updating and standardised implementation of the agreement on the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*" of December 1987;
- "Agreement on the restructuring of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*" of 7 July 1972 as amended on 11 April 1988;
- "Recommendations on work in the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* according to the agreement on the restructuring of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*" of 2 December 1977 as amended on 19 December 1988;
- "Agreements on common examination requirements for the *Abitur* examination (upper secondary school leaving certificate)" of 1 December 1989.

The redrafted agreements established **the conditions for the award of the general higher education entrance qualification at national level on a uniform basis**. They deal with ensuring a broad, general basic education for acquiring this qualification and address the openness of education in the *Gymnasium*, so as to provide a varied range of possibilities to focus on, with a view to both the general capacity for further study and initial vocational training or employment. The revised regulations also concern the inclusion of ***Fachgymnasium/berufliches Gymnasium*** **(technically and vocationally oriented Gymnasium) and double qualification courses** as possibilities for **acquiring the general higher education entrance qualification**.

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* had reached agreement on the restructuring of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* as long ago as 1972. Before the resolution was adopted, it had also been discussed, in particular, with the teachers' associations and delegates of the then West German Conference of Rectors and Presidents (now known as the *Hochschulrektorenkonferenz* or Conference of Higher Education Rectors and Presidents) as well as with parents' organisations and pupil representatives. The educational reasoning and structuring of the new senior level model was partly based on experience gathered during school pilot schemes in the *Länder*. Central to the reform of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* was curricular reform, whereby the curriculum was divided into compulsory and optional sections. The subject content of the compulsory section was designed to provide a broad outlook while the aim of the optional section was to open up the new *gymnasiale Oberstufe* system for further developments, e.g. by providing in-depth courses in conventional subjects and introducing new ones. The basic educational idea behind the reform was to encourage pupils to work independently and prepare themselves for academic study as well as help develop their personality. The particular objective of the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* lies in providing a **basic education with in-depth study of special subject areas preparing pupils for academic study**. This is reflected in its basic structure, i.e. teaching shared between core courses (usually 3 lessons per week) and special courses (5 to 6 lessons per week).

Based on the resolutions adopted by the Standing Conference in 1972 and 1988, the *gymnasiale Oberstufe* has been structured or developed as follows:

The *gymnasiale Oberstufe* comprises the 11th to 13th years (10th to 12th or 11th and 12th years in four *Länder*). The requirement for access is the entitlement to attend the *gymnasiale Oberstufe*, which can normally be acquired at the end of year 10 at the *Gymnasium* or, with comparable requirements, at other lower secondary school types. Building on the teaching received at the lower secondary level, the collective class situation is, following a transition period in year 10 or 11, replaced by courses in the final qualifying phase. Although pupils are still obliged to study certain subjects and groups of subjects, they now have considerable opportunity to make individual decisions about what topics to concentrate on by choosing from the increased range of subjects offered. Each school subject is assigned to a subject area in accordance with the principle of "affinity". These subject areas are:

- the linguistic-literary-artistic subject area;
- the social sciences subject area;
- the mathematical-scientific-technical subject area.

Each of the three subject areas must be represented continuously in the school record of each pupil until the end of the upper secondary level of the *Gymnasium* and in the *Abitur* examination. Besides the three subject areas referred to, the compulsory section also includes religious instruction and sport. Teaching normally comprises 30 lessons per week, 20 of which are devoted to compulsory and 10 to optional subjects.

Courses are categorised as core or special according to level *(Grundkurse* and *Leistungskurse* respectively). While the core courses (usually 3 teaching hours a week) are aimed at ensuring a broad general education for all pupils, the special courses (5 to 6 teaching hours a week) are designed to consolidate and deepen understanding and knowledge, and to prepare pupils for academic study. Up to two thirds of teaching takes place in the core courses. Each pupil must choose at least two special courses, one of which must be either German, continuation of a foreign language, mathematics or a science subject. Where German is the first special course, the four subjects in the *Abitur* examination must include mathematics or a foreign language. New subjects introduced at the upper level of the *Gymnasium*, including foreign languages and vocational subjects, can be offered as a second special course. Some of the *Länder* restrict the choice of special courses to particular subject combinations.

The *Abitur* examination concludes the upper level of the *Gymnasium.* Candidates are examined in four subjects, namely the two special subjects and another in which they take written and, in some cases, oral examinations, as well as a fourth subject which is examined only orally. All of the subject areas set out above have to be represented in the examination. Candidates who pass the *Abitur* examination at the end of year 13 are awarded a general higher education entrance qualification *(allgemeine Hochschulreife).* The *allgemeine Hochschulreife*, which until the year 2000 can still be obtained at the end of year 12 at schools in four *Länder*, also entitles the holder to commence any course of study at an institution of higher education.

The integrated *Gesamtschulen* (comprehensive schools) in a number of *Länder* go beyond the lower secondary level and also incorporate years 11 to 13 which are organised in the same way as the upper level of the *Gymnasium.*

The **agreements on uniform examination requirements for the *Abitur*** are a necessary addition for the restructuring of the upper level of the *Gymnasium* as they guarantee the uniformity of performance requirements for acquiring the general higher education entrance qualification. Specific areas of learning and examinations were incorporated into the new agreements to a greater extent than before and the number of subjects in which there are examination requirements was extended to 33. The uniform examination requirements were adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in December 1989.

3.1.3.4. EUROPE IN THE CLASSROOM

With its "Europe in the classroom" recommendation in December 1990, the Standing Conference presented the elements and guidelines of **schools' European education mission**.

The positive development of cooperation between the countries of Europe and of European integration within the European Community, the political, social and economic developments in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Paris Charter for a new Europe agreed at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe were all grounds for the Standing Conference to adopt a revised version of its "Europe in the classroom" agreement in 1990.

According to the recommendation, the school has the educational task of making pupils aware of the rapprochement of the European peoples and states and the new relations developing between them. Its job is, it says, to arouse an awareness of European unity and togetherness in the present younger generation. The recommendation points out in detail the knowledge to be imparted by the school with the objective of raising awareness among young people of a European identity. Suggestions for implementing the recommendation in the *Länder* point out the possibilities for dealing with European themes and issues in the various subjects taught. The topic of Europe should, according to the recommendation, be an obligatory component of geography, history, social studies, politics and those subjects with economic and legal content. In the view of the Standing Conference, languages, in particular, are also of central importance for learning about the cultural world of Europe. The learning of languages, it states, opens up access to other language communities. For this reason, as many pupils as possible should be given the opportunity of learning several foreign languages.

3.1.3.5. DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Since the 1970s, the *Länder* have, in school pilot schemes, been developing and testing teaching and organisational models – including suitable computer programmes – in the new subject area of information technology. The report entitled "The development of information technology teaching in Germany", issued by the Standing Conference on 6 May 1983, contains a status report on teaching in this area and fundamental statements on the significance of modern information technologies in the education system. These comments on the teaching of information technology added an important element to the objectives of education.

"The general concept for training in information technology" was adopted by the joint *Bund/Länder* Commission for Educational Planning and Research Promotion in 1987 as a basis for further development. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs had already approved the "Framework concept for information technology education in schools and initial vocational training" drawn up in this connection. It agreed to consider this concept when establishing the structures and purposes of information technology education in the school systems of the *Länder*. Recommendations made by the joint *Bund/Länder* Commission on "Providing schools with equipment and programs and the minimum requirements of computers suitable for schools" were also incorporated in this.

The most recent report by the Standing Conference on new information and communication technologies in schools of 12 June 1991 states that the endeavour to **develop and improve information technology education** in the school system is focused, in particular, on the following objectives:

- introduction of basic training in information technology into compulsory teaching in all lower secondary school types;
- equipping schools with suitable hardware and software;
- ensuring the required teaching competence through teacher training measures, concentrating especially on continuing and in-service teacher training;
- setting up a system of advice and information centres for questions regarding training in information technology;
- observing equal opportunity access to training in information technology for girls and boys.

3.1.3.6. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Environmental education plays a significant role in many subjects and areas of learning in schools. Teaching in this subject deals increasingly with specific matters relating to the pupils' own lives while, at the same time, directly addressing environmental aspects to an ever greater extent. This is shown in a report by the Standing Conference drawn up in October 1992 which also contains, for the first time, the endeavours of the "new *Länder*" to establish environmental education as an important element in the restructuring of their education systems. The Standing Conference had already published extensive reports in 1982 and 1986 setting out the situation and prospects for environmental education in schools.

According to the most recent report drawn up in 1992, the readiness of schools to deal with the environmental problems of the pupils' own surroundings should arouse the awareness of young people to accept joint responsibility for the place in which they live. The Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs are of the view that it has become increasingly important to safeguard our natural basis of existence and that the task of protecting the environment has therefore become even more urgent.

3.1.3.7. HEALTH EDUCATION

A special part of schools' educational duties is to generate an awareness of health matters amongst young people, encourage a responsible attitude towards the individual's health and educate young people to a health-conscious attitude, which also continues beyond their school days with a view to our living and environmental conditions. The November 1992 report by the Standing Conference entitled "The situation of health education in schools" shows that a teaching concept is required for health education in schools which looks at the tasks of health education in an integrated way, is oriented towards a healthy way of life and covers the living environment and surroundings of the school and family home. The focus of health education is on the areas of hygiene/dental hygiene, nutrition, sex education and AIDS prevention, addiction prevention and first-aid (e.g. safety on the way to and from school, and how to act in emergencies).

3.1.3.8. GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK - LOWER SECONDARY

A further resolution adopted by the Standing Conference, the "Agreement on school types and courses of education at the lower secondary level", establishes, for the first time, a common framework of guidance for all school types and courses of education, also including the new types of school in the "new *Länder*" *(Mittelschule, Regelschule* and *Sekundarschule)* and comparable schools in the "old *Länder*". The new agreement establishes the common and special features of school types and courses of education as well as a common timetable for the lower secondary level. It also regulates the conditions for the reciprocal recognition of qualifications and entitlements. Furthermore, the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs agreed in a special resolution to compare the requirements of the intermediate secondary leaving qualification in the *Länder* with the objective of harmonising in a binding manner standards in German, mathematics and the first foreign language.

3.2 REFORM OF EDUCATION IN THE NEW *LÄNDER* SINCE 1990

Following unification in October 1990, the establishment of a common and comparable basic structure of education was one of the main objectives of education policy in Germany. In contrast to the federal structure of the education system and the independence enjoyed by the *Länder* in the Federal Republic in cultural and educational matters, the education system in the GDR was run by a centralised administration and geared to the ideology of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED). All fundamental aspects of education and science in the GDR were shaped not only by the monopoly position of Marxist-Leninist party ideology but also by the close links between education policy and the centralised steering of the economy by the state.

Following reunification and the forming of the new *Länder*, the new *Land* parliaments created the statutory basis for **reforms** in education and the **structured school system** was introduced in all five *Länder*. Although the autonomy of the *Länder* facilitates independent developments in the area of education, the basis for its restructuring is, at the same time, "The agreement between the *Länder* on standardisation in the domain of the education system" (Hamburg Convention) in order to secure a common and comparable basic structure of the education system as well as the equivalence of courses of education for the reciprocal recognition of school qualifications beyond the borders of the individual *Länder* so as to guarantee unrestricted mobility.

The education legislation passed in 1991 resulted, in the *Länder* of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia, in a number of differences in school organisation compared with the common basic structure of the education system in the "old *Länder*", as established in the Hamburg Convention. Besides the *Gymnasium*, which was introduced in all five *Länder*, in particular because of the wishes of parents, some of the new *Länder* now also have **new school types *(Mittelschule, Regelschule, Sekundarschule)*.** Following a resolution adopted in June 1992, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of

Education and Cultural Affairs considers the new school types to be compatible with the basic structure of the education system established in the "Hamburg Convention" where they provide both *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* leaving qualifications.

The *Mittelschule*, the *Regelschule* and the *Sekundarschule* are school types with several courses of education in which the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* courses are combined both educationally and organisationally. These new school types are described briefly in the following:

3.2.1. *MITTELSCHULE*

The *Mittelschule* is a differentiated lower secondary school type in Saxony which offers general and vocationally oriented courses and provides the prerequisites for later vocational qualifications. Years 5 and 6 serve as a guidance phase. On entering year 7, the pupil decides on a certain specialisation in the compulsory optional area (technical, economic, social science, home economics, languages), with four to five lessons per week provided for these subjects. Pupils acquire the *Hauptschule* leaving certificate on passing year 9 and can also obtain the qualifying *Hauptschule* leaving certificate if they perform particularly well. The *Realschule* leaving certificate is acquired on passing year 10 and a final examination.

3.2.2. *SEKUNDARSCHULE*

The *Sekundarschule* in Saxony-Anhalt, which covers the 5th to the 9th or 10th years, is one of the new school types offering several courses. It is, alongside the *Gymnasium*, one of the standard school types. The teaching in this type of school can, in the first two years, be differentiated according to ability or in mixed-ability groups. Beginning in year 7, each pupil takes a certain number of compulsory optional subjects besides the normal compulsory classes. From the 7th year on, pupils attend either a *Hauptschule* course (7th to 9th or 10th years) or a *Realschule* course.

3.2.3. *REGELSCHULE*

The *Regelschule* in Thuringia, which caters for the 5th to the 9th or 10th years, is, like the *Mittelschule* and *Sekundarschule*, a new school type offering several courses of education. It offers general and vocationally oriented courses and provides the prerequisites for later vocational qualifications. In years 5 and 6, all pupils follow a common curriculum in all subjects. In some compulsory subjects from the 7th year and in additional subjects from the 9th year, teaching is offered at two levels of difficulty, corresponding to the demands of the *Hauptschule* and *Realschule* respectively. Pupils aiming for the *Realschule* leaving certificate are required to choose from a number of compulsory options (e.g. second foreign language) in the 7th year.

3.3 FURTHER SCHOOL REFORMS IN INDIVIDUAL *LÄNDER*

3.3.1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

To improve equal educational opportunities at school, girls and boys are being taught separately in the areas of science and sport in a large number of schools, initially on an experimental basis. The aim of this temporary reversal of the coeducation principle is to provide girls with better access to scientific and technical subject areas by enabling them to work and learn in an atmosphere free of the gender-specific role behaviour between girls and boys. Separate classes in the science subjects can also increase girls' awareness in choosing their later profession with regard to what have up until now been termed not typically women's professions. Separate sport classes enable girls and boys to engage in sports according to their physical abilities and needs without being influenced by the other sex.

3.3.2. ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR WORKING PERSONS WITH PARTICULAR ABILITIES

Possibilities exist in a number of *Länder* for applicants with a vocational qualification but no *Abitur* certificate to pursue a course of study at an institution of higher education. Proof of the knowledge and ability required to study in this regard is established by means of an admission procedure (e.g. through provisional registration for trial studies) or a test procedure at the higher education institution (e.g. placement test, aptitude test, aptitude interview).

3.3.3. EQUIVALENCE OF GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

To combine general and vocational education at the upper secondary level, double qualification courses have been introduced in a number of *Länder* which simultaneously provide a qualification to pursue higher education and a vocational qualification, usually in an intermediate career. These courses of education are sometimes offered at a new type of school, such as the *Kollegschule* in North Rhine-Westphalia. Where these double qualification courses comply with the provisions of an agreement reached by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in December 1987, the final examinations are recognised at national level. These standardised double qualification courses last four years and are completed by sitting two separate examinations. The requirement for access to such courses is the entitlement to enter the upper secondary level of the *Gymnasium*.

Promoting the equivalence of general and vocational education continues to be one of the priorities of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. In 1994, agreement was reached on the following additional steps:

- The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs will examine the possibility of further distinctions being made in the structure of *Abitur* courses offered in the education systems of the *Länder* (general higher education entrance qualification, subject area specific higher education entrance qualification, (general) polytechnic entrance qualification, subject area specific polytechnic entrance qualification).
- The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs is seeking to reach agreements establishing which leaving certificates for general and vocational courses of education can, on the basis of their educational content, the standards demanded by them and the qualifications they provide, be recognised reciprocally in the context of entitlements to further and higher education.

MAIN SOURCES USED

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Zur Situation der Gesundheitserziehung in der Schule. Report by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of 6 November 1992.

Ganztagsbetreuung für Schulkinder. Report by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Resolution adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs on 5 February 1993.

Vereinbarung über die Schularten und Bildungsgänge im Sekundarbereich I. Resolution adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs on 3 December 1993.

GREECE

The section where more changes can be found is that related to the curriculum, where modifications have taken place with regard to subjects, timetables and complementary activities. Some other reforms concern teachers, remedial teaching and integration of returnee and immigrant pupils, departments supporting the school (the Pedagogical Institute) and guidance.

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

During the period covered by the survey, there have been no reforms of the aims of the education system in relation to compulsory education.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

As in the previous chapter, no changes have taken place. Consequently, compulsory education includes nine years of compulsory schooling comprising the *Dimotiko Scholio* (Primary Education) – six school years for pupils aged between 6 and 12 – and the *Gymnasio* (Lower Secondary Education) – three school years, for 12- to 15-year-old pupils.

Pre-school education is not compulsory, but it is becoming increasingly such, as far as the regions are concerned, where the local authorities have regional coverage. This particular education embraces two school years and the age of pupils attending it is from 4 to 6 years.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

In this chapter dealing with administration of education, the changes noted mention some partial modifications.

In Law 1304/7-12-82, a basic division is made by separating the specialist/pedagogical training of teachers on the one hand from the administration of education on the other. Thus the post of Inspector is abolished and the posts of School Adviser and of Head of the Education Department or Office are created.

The School Adviser's task is to give teachers specialist/pedagogical guidance, to participate in the assessment and training of teachers, and to encourage scientific research efforts in the field of education. He is selected for a fixed term of office and has higher education qualifications.

In Presidential Decree 214/29-5-84, the duties and responsibilities of School Advisers in pre-school and primary education, special education, secondary general education and secondary technical and vocational education are laid down.

In Law 1566/30-9-1985, three keystones are established in education: a) Administration, b) Public Participation and Democratic Planning, and c) Specialist/Pedagogical Training.

Administration includes the Heads of Departments and Offices, Headteachers and School Advisers. This law introduces the system of public participation, which puts the school in touch with the local community itself, and with its representatives. Specialist training is provided by the Pedagogical Institute and School Advisers.

On the other hand, the task of managing school property and meeting the costs of repairs and running costs of schools falls to the local authorities, to which the necessary funds are transferred through Prefectural Councils (Law 1894/27-8-90 and Law 2009/14-2-92).

The following bodies have been set up:

- Municipal and communal education committees which make proposals to the relevant local authorities on questions of education and allocation of financial support.
- Prefectural or provincial education committees which examine questions of education and bring them before the relevant council, on the basis of proposals put forward by the municipal and communal education committees.
- The National Education Council, which makes proposals to the government on questions of education policy, education, continuing education and adult education.
- School Councils responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the schools.
- School Committees responsible for managing the budgets which are made available for running costs.
- Parents' associations and unions have been organised; these are taking on an important role in the running of schools.

At the same time, the Pedagogical Institute has been re-established: this is purely a research and administrative body which is organically linked with teaching practice through the School Councils and has the tasks of:

- carrying out scientific research and study of aspects of primary and secondary education;
- drawing up and submitting proposals on the planning and programming of education policy;
- supervising the application and development of educational technology;
- planning and attending to the implementation of in-service teacher training programmes

IMPORTANCE OF THESE REFORMS

The reforms mentioned above are considered particularly important because:

- administrative duties have been separated from specialist instruction through the institution of the School Councils and Heads of Departments and Education Offices;
- decision-making has been decentralised and democratised by broadening the participation of Local Government and social bodies in decision-making and the financial management of education;
- the policy of protecting the family is reinforced by the care of children of working parents, and by a reduced timetable for mothers working as teachers;
- an effort has been made to coordinate the various bodies and make pre-school education universal;
- senior staff such as education advisers and headteachers who have been elected to public office may be recalled.

4. CURRICULUM

4.1. PRIMARY EDUCATION

There have been many reforms over the last ten years.

Law 1566/30-9-1985 is the basic law which was passed for primary and secondary education and which laid new foundations for the aims and objectives as well as organisation and running of primary and secondary education.

The aim of this law is to link the school with society and to modernise curricula, making them sufficiently flexible to provide the best possible grounding for pupils and to encourage adaptability, specific skills and critical thought.

The new law gives priority to the quality factor by aiming at new curricula and improvements in teaching methods and educational resources. It establishes an education system which is dynamic and flexible; it gives a decisive impetus to decentralisation, introduces democratic planning into education, prevents social isolation, brings about the democratisation of education and encourages a socially responsible attitude.

Teaching of foreign languages was integrated into schools, initially on an experimental basis, and in 1992/93 it was established in all *polythesia* schools (i.e. schools with four or more teachers).

The teaching of music, physical education, and foreign languages by teachers with the relevant specialisation was introduced experimentally in the "schools for trial implementation of new curricula", and in the school year 1993/94 it was extended to all *polythesia* schools.

In addition, the following changes should be mentioned:

- Environmental education was introduced.
- There were changes in the method of assessing teaching, teachers and pupils.
- Books for teachers were published.
- Attention was given to a reduced timetable for teachers who are mothers or trade unionists.
- Programmes of creative activities for pupils with working parents were implemented.
- Remedial teaching programmes were put into effect for pupils experiencing difficulties.
- New timetables were put into effect.

The **curricula** in primary school have the following subjects and hours:

	Classes 1 and 2	Class 3	Class 4	Classes 5 and 6
Modern Greek	9	9	9	8
Mathematics	4	3	3	4
Environmental Studies	4	3	3	
Religion		2	2	2
Aesthetic Education	4	4	4	2
Physical Education	2	2	2	2
History		2	2	2
English			3*	3
Geography				1
Physics				3
Social and Political Education				1

(*) Introduced in 1992/93

ASSESSMENT

It has been laid down in Presidential Decree 462/1991 and Ministerial Resolution of the same year that in classes 1 and 2 assessment will include the verbal descriptions Excellent (A), Very Good (B), Good (C), Fair (D).

In classes 5 and 6, the assessment system is supplemented with three review tests, for purely educational purposes.

Also, in classes 3, 4, 5 and 6, numerical grading is introduced alongside the verbal grading (Excellent (9-10), Very Good (7-8), Good (5-6), Fair).

This same Presidential Decree also specifies that "all pupils who have been attending for more than half the academic year are moved up from one class to the next, or leave primary school".

The above reforms are considered important for the following reasons.

- The detailed curricula have been modernised and have become more open-ended. They have been linked to new developments in science and technology and to the latest principles of educational science and teaching methodology.
- Books for pupils have been updated (an on-going process), so that they are more practice-oriented and more attractive.
- Teachers have been provided with an important reference book, the "teacher's book", which gives them the necessary assistance and guidelines in organising their teaching.
- The teaching of foreign languages means that tomorrow's citizens are better equipped, and forms a basis for intercultural education.
- With the integration of educational specialisations into primary education, particular emphasis is placed on arts/music education and physical education.
- An effort is being made to increase pupils' awareness of environmental issues.
- In-service training is being provided for teachers in regional training centres (PEK).

4.2. LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

Law 1566/1985 is the basic law which was passed for primary and secondary education and which laid new foundations for the aims and objectives as well as the organisation and running of primary and secondary education.

As an innovation in 1990, environmental education was introduced as a part of the curriculum of secondary schools.

Under Law 1894/1990 and Presidential Decree 35/1991, sections are set up for the teaching of optional subjects in *Gymnasia* according to the pupils' interests, with tuition in the following subjects, in addition to the standard detailed curriculum: music and dance, plastic arts, theatre and cinema, journalism, foreign languages and socio-economic cooperative issues, and health.

Compulsory teaching of a second foreign language has been introduced in *Gymnasia*, with three hours per week.

Special sports classes have been set up for the purpose of supporting school sports, bringing out the pupils' special aptitudes and developing them further with the aid of specific physical education programmes.

In addition to the above, activities can take place in every *Gymnasio*, either independently or in collaboration with other schools, which aim to foster the pupils' intellectual development, aesthetic awareness and creative expression as well as issues relating to their immediate surroundings and the wider environment. Such activities may relate to scientific and cultural issues, and environmental education activities.

Centres for environmental education have been set up and are in operation, using materials made available by the universities to meet the schools' requirements. The aim is to make the pupils aware of the need to protect the environment and maintain the operation of biological cycles and to introduce them to environmental problems.

New subjects introduced in 1993 were informatics and new technologies. These are taught for one hour each in classes 1 and 2 of *Gymnasio*, and informatics is taught for two hours in class 3.

With the introduction of informatics, new technologies and the second foreign language, the timetable has changed. The programme up to and including 1992/93 was 30 hours a week for the three years of the *Gymnasio*. It is only from 1993/94 that the timetable for the first two years went up to 33 hours a week and that of the third year to 34 hours.

5. TEACHING STAFF

As a first reform introduced in this field, mention should be made of a basic division in the area of education by separating the specialist/pedagogical training of teachers from the administration of education, which took place in 1982 and has already been mentioned in the context of reforms in administration. Under Law 1304/1982, the post of Inspector was abolished and the posts of School Adviser and Head of the Education Department were created.

The School Adviser's task is to give teachers specialist/pedagogical guidance, to participate in the assessment and training of teachers, and to encourage scientific research efforts in the field of education.

As mentioned above with reference to Administration, Law 1566/85 established Specialist/Pedagogical Training as one of the keystones of the education system. The Pedagogical Institute and School Advisers provide this specialist training.

With the re-establishment of the Pedagogical Institute, an important impulse is given to pedagogical training since amongst its tasks are:

- carrying out scientific research and study of aspects of primary and secondary education;
- drawing up and submitting proposals on the planning and programming of education policy;
- supervising the application and development of educational technology;
- planning and attending to the implementation of in-service teacher training programmes.

5.1. BASIC TRAINING

Law 1268/82 establishes the first Education Departments for Primary School Teachers and Nursery Teachers, in the Universities of Athens, Thessalonica, Patras, Ioannina, Thrace and Crete. These departments have courses lasting at least eight semesters.

Under Presidential Decree 83/1984, two new departments of pedagogy for primary education and two for nursery education have been established in the University of the Aegean and the University of Thessaly.

Presidential Decree 447/89 discontinues the operation of the Pedagogical Academies where prospective school teachers studied for two years, and the operation of the Nursery Teachers' Colleges *(scholes nipiagogon)* where prospective nursery teachers studied for two years.

Presidential Decree 320/83, stipulates the commencement of operation of the Departments. This means that the prospective school teachers' and nursery teachers' studies are now of four years' duration, at university level.

5.2. IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

There are two forms of training for serving teachers in primary and secondary education.

5.2.1. COMPULSORY TRAINING

Three patterns are established.

- Introductory training is intended for those applying for teaching posts, or for new teachers before they take up their duties. It aims at renewing and updating their practical and theoretical training, bringing their knowledge and teaching methods into line with current educational practice, and familiarising them with specialist and pedagogical matters which are related to the practice of their profession.
- Periodic training is organised every year in two training cycles, each lasting up to three months; this aims at informing teachers of developments in their field, including new education programmes and new teaching methods. This training must be as comprehensive as possible, enabling teachers to carry out their work in the most effective way possible (Law 1824/88 and Presidential Decree 250/92).
- Special short training courses are linked with educational reforms and innovations in education, modifications to detailed curricula and the introduction of new courses, new teaching methods, new books, etc.

5.2.2. OPTIONAL TRAINING

In 1985, under Law 1566/85, optional short seminars were provided for, which aim to provide teachers with information on special matters of general interest (diet, environment, Europe, health, the theatre, etc.) and Presidential Decree 235/93 provides for one-year training in Special Colleges (teaching and pedagogical training for teachers in primary and secondary education, which has yet to be implemented).

5.3. RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

According to Presidential Decree 250/92, introductory in-service training is compulsory. It is an employment requirement and qualification for all teachers recruited from 1993 onwards in state primary schools. Introductory in-service training is a condition sine qua non of appointment for all secondary school teachers except teachers in technical and vocational schools who have already attended the pedagogical seminar held at the PATES (technical teacher training college for teachers in technical and vocational education).

According to Law 1771/88, school teachers and nursery teachers of different creeds and religious faiths can be recruited in primary education.

Placements of newly recruited school or nursery teachers are made according to social criteria on which they receive points, and the system is computerised (Presidential Decree 255/93).

New divisions of primary school teachers have been set up (Presidential Decrees 349/92, 64/93 and 323/93) – the Physical Education Teachers' Division, Music Teachers' Division and English Teachers' Division.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

6.1. EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION TO HELP PUPILS

Law 1824/88, establishes remedial teaching for pupils in primary school and *Gymnasio* (Lower Secondary Education). Presidential Decree 429/91 defines clearly the term "remedial teaching" as meaning a special teaching programme attended by the pupil in some particular subjects. With reference to primary education, these subjects are mainly modern Greek language and mathematics and, in secondary education, mathematics, physics, chemistry and foreign language.

As a priority, remedial teaching programmes are provided for pupils in classes 1 and 2 who have not acquired the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic.

According to the requirements and the number of pupils attending, the programme of remedial teaching covers 1 or 2 teaching hours a day, and up to six hours a week in primary education or 10 hours a week in secondary education, and is provided during or after the hours of the daily timetable. These groups cannot include more than five pupils per subject.

Following a decision by the teachers' association, these programmes are attended by pupils who are low achievers in the above subjects and are therefore unable to keep up and participate effectively in the learning process in school.

6.2. SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN OF GREEK ÉMIGRÉS

Presidential Decrees 369/85 and 436/84 establish schools for children of Greek émigrés for the purpose of improving the integration of children of returnee Greeks into the Greek education system. These schools follow the Greek education system, and teaching at these schools is in two languages (Greek and English in Athens, and Greek and German in Thessaloniki), according to the children's level of knowledge of the Greek language.

6.3. INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS, RETURNEE PUPILS, ETC.

To improve the integration of returnee pupils, children of Greek immigrants or children of repatriated Greeks and foreign nationals, sections for remedial teaching and induction classes have been set up for the first time in primary and secondary education (Presidential Decree 494/83 and Law 1894/90).

These children are given up to 25 hours of extra tuition per week in subjects within the Greek detailed curriculum, depending on the pupil's level.

When the number of children is 10 or more, induction classes follow the school's detailed curriculum and timetable for the corresponding level.

In these classes and sections, the language and culture of the country of origin may be taught for up to eight hours a week.

6.4. CREATIVE ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES FOR PUPILS WHO HAVE WORKING PARENTS

The need to occupy pupils outside school hours, while both their parents are at work, has led the government to run creative activity programmes in state schools, mainly in the larger cities. These programmes include activities with built-in learning and educational elements corresponding to the interests and needs of the pupils. They consist mainly of recreational, artistic and sports activities, preparation of school work and reinforcement of learning, and other activities chosen by the school itself. They are held on the school premises and usually run from 7 to 8.15 a.m. and from 12 noon to 4 p.m., i.e. before and after regular school hours. These reforms are considered important because:

- extra tuition is being provided for children with important learning problems;
- a meaningful effort is being made to provide for immigrants, refugees and returnee pupils coming back to the country, granting the highest priority to this matter.

6.5. COMPENSATING FOR SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITIES

Since 1994, schools in regions with socioeconomic problems have been participating in special after-school support programmes to alleviate learning difficulties.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

The most relevant reform concerning school support services concerns the re-establishment of the Pedagogical Institute. This is purely a research and administrative body organically linked with teaching practice through the School Councils and has the tasks of:

- carrying out scientific research and study of aspects of primary and secondary education;
- drawing up and submitting proposals on planning and programming of education policy;
- supervising the application and development of educational technology;
- planning and attending to the implementation of in-service teacher training programmes.

School careers guidance is extended to all *Gymnasio* (Lower Secondary Education) classes, and its implementation is organised at Prefectural level.

In the Secondary Education Departments and Offices of the Prefectures, Young People's Advisory Centres are being set up and are operating according to the existing needs, to promote programmes for the pupils' health education. Their task is to implement, support and supervise health education programmes for pupils, focusing on healthy lifestyles and the development of the personality and self-esteem, and to meet the needs of the school units of the Prefecture, in terms of social psychology. They are able to identify and diagnose the need for short-term psychiatric intervention, and refer cases of pupils requiring special psychiatric treatment. Parent counselling is also provided within this framework.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

Pursuant to a Presidential Decree which has been issued, the teaching work of each school unit will be assessed at the end of the academic year by the teachers' association, taking account of the relevant opinion of the Parents' and Guardians' Association, with a view to highlighting weaknesses and improving the curriculum for the coming year. A relevant report will be submitted by the Headteacher of the school to the School Advisers' Office and the appropriate Head of Department or Education Office.

The teachers' work will be assessed by the relevant School Adviser and the Headteacher of the school unit in which the teachers are employed.

SPAIN

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

The main reforms concerning compulsory education carried out in recent years are three: the reform of the **Education Administration** to adjust it to the principle of decentralisation of the state; the reform of the **school management** and the **development of the right to education** set up by the Organic Act on the Right to Education (LODE) of 1985; and the reform of **the structure and academic arrangement of the education system** established by the Organic Act on the General Arrangement of the Educational System (LOGSE) of 1990.

Basically, there were three reasons impelling the reforms of the education system: the fact of adapting them to a democratic state model, the demand for a guarantee of the right to education through a participatory model and the need for a new education system. The Acts concerning the current education system and which form the basis of the main present reforms, besides the Spanish Constitution, are the aforementioned LODE and LOGSE.

The **Spanish Constitution**, passed before the period analysed here, defines all the basic orientations which are the core of the legislation concerning education. There are three outstanding aspects in the Constitution: the acknowledgment of the right to education as one of the fundamental rights that the state must guarantee, other basic rights related to education, and the sharing of the educational powers by the Central Administration and the Autonomous Communities.

The main aims of education are included in the **Organic Act on the Right to Education** (LODE), as well as the right of all Spaniards to a free basic education allowing them to develop their personality and enabling them to carry out some sort of work useful to society. In order to guarantee the right to education, a mixed network of schools is established in which publicly funded schools and a network of private schools are included. Finally, this Act sets up the right of the members of the educational community to participate in the control and management of the schools financed with public funds. Besides the participation in school life, the LODE establishes the participation of the sectors concerned in the general programming of education through the State School Council. Prior to the LODE, another Act had been promulgated in 1980, the Organic Act on the School Statute (LOECE), that regulated some issues concerning the right to education and the participation of the educational community in the management and funding of private schools. For various reasons, it was soon replaced.

The Organic Act on the General Arrangement of the Educational System (LOGSE) regulates, since October 1990, the structure and organisation of the Spanish education system at non-university levels. It replaces the 1970 General Act on Education. The main lines of this new Act focus on the real extension of compulsory education up to 16, on the rearrangement of the structure of the education system and on the improvement of teaching quality. The enactment of the LOGSE was preceded by an extensive debate within the educational community and by the experimentation of certain changes in the curriculum. A schedule has been established for its gradual implementation, the year 2000 being the deadline.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The reform of the aims is carried out in the LODE. This was the answer to the change in the socio-political framework of the country, which required an adjustment of the aims to the new democratic principles and to the rights and duties established by the Constitution. The specific aims for the compulsory levels are developed in the LOGSE which also includes the general aims.

AIMS OF EDUCATION

FORMER SITUATION	PRESENT SITUATION
• The education of the whole human being, the harmonious development of the personality and the training for the responsible practice of freedom, inspired in the Christian concept of life and in the tradition and culture of the fatherland; the integration and social promotion and the encouragement of socialisation; all in accordance with what is established in the National Movement Principles and in the rest of the Fundamental Acts of the Kingdom. • The acquisition of study and working habits and the ability to carry out vocational activities that could increase the social, cultural, scientific and economic development of the country. • The inclusion of those regional peculiarities that enrich the unity and cultural heritage of Spain, as well as the encouragement of an understanding spirit and one of international cooperation.	• The full development of the student's personality. • Education in the respect of the rights and fundamental freedom and in the practice of tolerance and freedom within the democratic principles of co-existence. • Training to participate actively in social and cultural life. • The acquisition of intellectual habits and working techniques, as well as aesthetic, historic, humanistic, technical and scientific knowledge. • Education in the respect of the linguistic and cultural plurality of Spain. • Education for peace, cooperation and solidarity among countries.
• In **Basic General Education** (EGB – *Educación General Básica),* the education will be aimed at the acquisition, development and functional use of the habits and instrumental techniques of learning, at the training of the imagination, observation and reflection abilities, at the acquisition of moral-religious habits and notions, at the development of aptitudes for living together and for the reinforcement of the sense of belonging to the local, national and international communities, at initiation into aesthetic and artistic appreciation and expression and at the development of a civic-social awareness and of physical and sports abilities.	• The aim of **Primary Education** will be to provide all children with a common core education that makes possible the acquisition of basic cultural concepts, the abilities related to oral expression, reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as a gradual autonomy of action in their environment. • The aim of **Compulsory Secondary Education** (ESO – *Educación Secundaria Obligatoria)* will be to provide all pupils with basic cultural elements, to train them to assume their duties and exercise their rights and to prepare them for working life or for access to middle level specific vocational training or to the Baccalaureate.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The LOGSE extends the length of compulsory education up to age 16. (Prior to the LOGSE coming into effect, it was only up to 14.)

The most important alterations in the **structure** concern: the extension of the length of compulsory education from 8 to 10 years; the splitting up into two stages of the former Basic General Education (Primary Education and Compulsory Secondary Education); and the replacement of the double qualification at the end of the compulsory stage (Certificate of Basic Education – *Graduado Escolar* – and Certificate of School Attendance – *Certificado de Escolaridad)* by only one certificate (Certificate of Secondary Education – *Graduado en Educación Secundaria).*

Under the reform, the **comprehensive model** is extended up to age 16, the same as compulsory education, delaying the choice among the different branches of non-compulsory secondary education until after 16. Some optional subjects are introduced in the second phase of secondary education (at 13 or 14 years old).

Regarding the **school calendar**, the general organisation of the school year was set up in 1970 in the legislative development of the LGE and it has not been changed since then, letting the Autonomous Communities fix the dates for the beginning and end of the school year and holidays.

Education policy must combine the pattern of **school provision** (planning of the availability of school places) with the right of school choice and with the allocation of the required school places, having to keep the balance between them. The LGE had already assumed this principle and subsequently the LODE has developed it further. The Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) is responsible for general planning policy, but the autonomous education administrations determine their respective school provision. This consists of a mixed network of schools financed by public funds. The education administration must make a rational offer of school places according to the public and private resources. The freedom of school choice is established in the LODE as a fundamental element of the right to education, inspired by the principles that all pupils have the right to a school place that gives them basic education and that both parents and course tutors have the right to choose a school, either public or private. It also regulates the procedure and admissions criteria of pupils in the schools financed from public funds. The non-publicly funded private schools are free to determine their admissions procedures.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Reforms of decision-making levels. The administration of education, as the rest of public administration, has undergone important changes from the enactment of the Constitution to the present day to adjust to the decentralisation principle that considers the organisation of the state as a State of Autonomies. Before the Constitution, education administration was centralised at the Ministry of Education and Science, leaving the local administrations with only some powers.

Because of this process, the education administration has been structured in three levels, according to the administrative levels responsible for the different powers: State Administration *(Administración central),* Ministry of Education and Science (MEC) with its central and peripheral services (Provincial Administration - *Administración provincial)* in county towns; Autonomous Administration *(Administración autonómica),* Departments of Education of the different autonomous governments that have already assumed full authority regarding educational issues; and Local Administration *(Administración local),* town councils and municipal services.

There is also a series of powers shared by the state and the Autonomous Communities. So far only seven of the 17 communities have assumed full exercise of their authority (Andalucia, the

Basque country, Canaries, Catalonia, Galicia, Navarre and Valencia). The rest of them are still run by the MEC.

Regarding the **participation of society in the education system,** the most important reform appears with the setting up, by means of the LODE, of the School Councils of the state, of the Autonomous Communities and of the local communities, where representatives of parents, teachers, pupils, unions and different associations participate.

3.2. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOLS

The reforms in this field have been regulated by the LODE and, in certain aspects, by the LOGSE. The two fields embodied in this reform concerning public schools and state-maintained private schools are their organisation and the participation of the different members of the educational community in school life. The changes which have taken place in non-state-maintained private schools are minor ones, and related to the minimum requirements.

In recent years, two major reforms have been carried out in the **organisation chart** of public and publicly funded private schools and, therefore, in the functions of the different school governing bodies.

BASIC ORGANISATION CHART OF PUBLIC AND STATE-MAINTAINED PRIVATE SCHOOLS

FORMER SITUATION (LOECE)	PRESENT SITUATION (LODE AND LOGSE)
Individual Positions:	Individual Positions (Management team):
Headteacher	Headteacher
Head of Studies*	Head of Studies*
Secretary*	Secretary or Administrator*
Collegiate bodies:	Collegiate bodies:
Direction Council	School Council
Teaching Staff	Teaching Staff
Financial Board	Teaching Coordination Bodies

(*) Only in public schools

Thus, the LODE regulates the functioning of two new collegiate governing bodies: the **Management Team**, composed of the Headteacher, Head of Studies, Secretary and any others that school organic regulations may determine; and the **School Board**, the effective participation body of the educational community in which the **Financial Committee** is nominated. The LOGSE regulates the **teaching coordination bodies**, which all schools are obliged to have (in a variety of forms, depending on the Autonomous Community). In addition the function of **Administrator** has appeared in the secondary schools. The Administrator post, a non-teaching one, replaces the Secretary (job formerly done by a teacher).

Under the LODE and the LOGSE, the **functions** of the governing bodies are modified. Regarding the functions of Headteachers, their responsibilities are shared by the Management Team and the School Board, but at the same time their role is reinforced. These acts establish the responsibilities of both the Secretary (of a clerical type) and the Head of Studies (of an organisational and academic type) that were not specified in such detail in the LOECE. The main reform is the creation of the School Board which is defined as a participation body of the educational community in school management and which becomes the real management and controlling body of the school, taking many of the former functions of the Headteacher. On the other hand, the responsibilities of the Teachers' Body are limited by the School Board.

The LODE modifies **the manner of appointment of Headteachers**. In the past, they were appointed by the administration, but now they are appointed by the members of the school community through the School Board. The requirements for access to the role of Headteacher have also been slightly altered.

The participation of the different members of the school community is reformed by the LODE by introducing some basic organisational aspects that allow for a democratic and participative functioning of the school. **Teachers** only participated in the school life through the Teachers' Body. Since 1985, teachers can also participate through the School Board and the Financial Committee. **Parents** used to participate in the school life through the Direction Council only when they belonged to the Parents Association. The LODE allows for parents to be members of the School Board even if they do not belong to the Parents Association. The LODE states that **pupils**, from Compulsory Secondary Education onwards, can participate in the school life through the School Board. Pupils, like parents, can associate to participate in the school life.

On the other hand, there have also been reforms in the **school typology**. When the LGE of 1970 was in force, there were three types of schools: Basic General Education *(Educación General Básica),* Baccalaureate *(Bachillerato)* and Vocational Training Schools *(Formación Profesional).* Since the enactment of the LOGSE, there is a different typology: Infant and Primary Schools and Secondary Education Schools, including Specific Vocational Training. This does not imply that there may not be schools, mainly private, that include all the levels or varied combinations of them.

The reform of the **minimum requirements** to be fulfilled by directly publicly funded schools and non-publicly funded private schools is not very significant. The LODE does away with those referring to the number of school units, to the implementation of the curriculum and to complementary services. However, in 1991 when developing the LOGSE, the same criteria are re-established, but two further ones are added: the number of school units and the minimum support staff.

3.3. FUNDING

In the field of educational financing, two crucial reforms have been implemented:

The decentralisation of educational financing, parallel to the educational decentralisation, by means of which the Autonomous Communities with transferred powers can determine the procedure of educational funding, the local administrations cooperate in school funding (expenditure on school facilities, various services and complementary activities, as well as the financing of the schools directly under them) and the schools have autonomy to plan and manage the economic resources except those for staff salaries.

The financing with public funds of private schools that request it, but only if they fulfill certain requirements regulated by the administration of education. In the past, the public funding of private schools was not regulated in an appropriate way. The LODE regulates the criteria, the requirements and the procedure for financing. It establishes a mixed network of schools, distinguishing, according to the manner of funding, public schools (public ownership and financing), publicly funded private schools (private ownership and public financing) and non-publicly funded private schools (private ownership and private financing). On the other hand, it must be pointed out that the number of publicly funded private schools was very small in the past, while nowadays 90% of private schools providing compulsory education are financed from public funds.

4. CURRICULUM

The LOGSE has changed the curriculum of compulsory education that, until this Act, had been regulated by two subsequent Amendments of the 1970 General Act on Education: the Pedagogic Orientations (1971) for the Higher Stage and the Renovated Syllabuses (1981/82) for the Initial and Middle Stages.

The **present curricular model** suggested by the LOGSE has meant:

- The transition from the **technological model** of a prescriptive curriculum to an **organic-contextual** one, where teachers take part in its development, sequencing and adjusting to the school and the pupils themselves.
- The transition from a **closed curriculum**, decided only by the Ministry of Education and the Autonomous Communities, to a **more open, flexible and decentralised one**, where three levels of specification are established: 1) the compulsory curriculum, including the minimum curriculum requirements, determined by the state and by a percentage of it determined by the Autonomous Communities; 2) the development, sequencing and adjustment of the compulsory curriculum to a particular school, in curricular stage projects carried out by the school's teaching staff; and 3) the adaptation of this project to the classroom, done by the teacher concerned.
- The new curriculum includes two principles with important implications: **the principles of comprehensiveness and diversity**. It also guarantees a common core education for all pupils, and sets up the means to provide for diversity that can have a variety of reasons (ability, culture, socio-economic background, etc.) and subject options are promoted after the second phase of secondary education.

The LOGSE reforms the **educational objectives of the compulsory curriculum** in two ways:

- There is a change in the way the objectives are defined; from being "observable behaviour" they come to be "general abilities".
- As the curriculum is now a more open one, the objectives are scheduled over longer periods of time: for the primary and compulsory secondary stages (not according to "cycles" as before) and also for areas. Subjects providing a basic vocational training are introduced for all pupils at the end of compulsory secondary education.

The LOGSE introduces the following reforms regarding content:

- The **percentage** of the minimum compulsory content required is now established, and it will never be more than 55% of the school timetable in Autonomous Communities with their own vernacular language or 65% in the rest of them.
- The content that was organised only according to areas or subjects introduces a new differentiation: conceptual content (facts, concepts and principles), **procedural content, related to procedures, and attitudinal content, related to attitudes, values and norms**. The most important novelty has been to rescue from the "hidden curriculum" the procedural and attitudinal contents and incorporate them into the minimum educational requirements, in order to promote their assessment and, hence, their teaching.

Regarding **the subjects** themselves, the changes are the introduction of a foreign language in primary education from the third year onwards (it was introduced before from the sixth year onwards) and a second foreign language in compulsory secondary education; at this stage, technology is also introduced, and at both stages great weight is attached to the so called "cross-curricular topics", introducing certain changes in them:

FORMER SECTORAL OBJECTIVES	PRESENT CROSS-CURRICULAR TOPICS
• Training for living together • Training in road safety • Consumer Education • Training for improving and caring for the physical and social environment • Health Education • Initiation into the practice of basic technologies	• Education for peace • Training in road safety • Consumer Education • Environmental Education • Health Education • Education for the equality of the sexes • Moral and Civic Education

The time allocated to lessons continues to be 25 hours, shared out over five days, in primary education. In the new stage of compulsory secondary education, 30 hours per week will be the maximum time available.

The reform of **teaching methodology** envisages the following innovations. First, the psychological basis of the curriculum has changed: from a theory based on teaching, that took as its basis respect for the developmental stages of the child as defined by Piaget, it is now based on a theory more concerned with learning, which also recognises the aforementioned Piagetian stages but adds a constructivist orientation. Besides, more human and economic resources are available to make possible individualised teaching and attention to diversity.

The characteristics of the pupil's **assessment** are similar to those of the previous period (continuous, formative, initial, progress and final). Nevertheless, at the present time, when assessing pupils, besides paying proper attention to objectives and contents, "prescriptive evaluation criteria" for each stage and area must be borne in mind. The changes introduced by the LOGSE regarding **assessment linked to the promotion** of students are also important. The evaluation must be **global in primary education** (pupils are promoted if their general abilities in relation to the cycle or stage have been developed, without differentiating between areas) and **integrative in secondary education** (pupils are promoted if the predicted abilities in each area have been developed, but without ignoring the general abilities of the cycle or stage). Pupils cannot repeat the year more than twice in the whole period of compulsory secondary education. Besides, it is not the administration which decides the criteria of assessment and promotion from one cycle or year to the next; this is now a decision to be taken by the school teaching staff.

In the new approach, educational evaluation is not reduced to a valuation of the pupil's progress in the learning process; the teachers themselves must assess their own teaching practice, the curricular project undertaken, the syllabus designed and the real development of the curriculum.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The main reform concerning teachers has been the reorganisation of the education system carried out by the LOGSE. The extension of compulsory education up to 16 and the splitting up of this period into two stages has brought about a redefinition of the required **initial qualifications** to teach the new levels at both public and private schools. Up to the present, the compulsory stage (EGB) was taught by teachers whose initial training was a University Diploma (three years) or a University Degree. After the LOGSE, the qualification of primary school teacher, *Maestro*, (a three year course at a training college) is required to teach in primary schools, to the exclusion of all other qualifications. To be a teacher in compulsory secondary education (ESO), it is necessary to have a University Degree or to be a Senior Engineer or Architect, all specialities included, (5 or 6 years of University Training) and to do a one year course of teacher training.

In **in-service training**, the setting up in 1984 of an integrated network of Teachers' Centres (CEPs) specially devoted to the ongoing training of non-university teachers is the main outstanding fact.

The stable **teachers' bodies** at public schools have been modified. Since the LOGSE, teachers in primary schools belong to the primary school teachers' body *(Maestros)* (formerly the teachers' body of EGB), and those teaching in ESO make up the body of secondary school teachers, in which former teachers of baccalaureate and vocational training have been combined.

Access to the teaching profession in public schools has not changed radically, still being through a competitive examination. The only alteration derives from the process of educational decentralisation; this means that each Autonomous Community with full powers in educational matters sets its own competitive examinations. As far as private schools are concerned, the LODE sets up mechanisms for the appointment of teachers in publicly funded private schools which mean a greater participation of the school educational community in the process.

The LOGSE extends the possibility of **professional promotion of teachers** to higher posts under determined conditions and by passing specific examinations.

Regarding the **working conditions and salary policy**, the most significant point is that the differences between the working conditions of teachers in the public sector and those in publicly funded private schools have been reduced with the subsequent reforms, because the administration itself, and not the school authority, takes on the remuneration of teachers.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

The principle of equality of educational opportunities means special attention to those groups of people who, because of their personal and/or social conditions, are at a disadvantage. In the Spanish education system, this was officially regulated in 1983 by means of Royal Decree 1174/1983 on Compensatory Education. Up to that date, the education of special groups was carried out by the private sector through specific programmes in collaboration with the MEC. In this decree, attention to the needs of these groups is structured and organised by the MEC itself. Under this framework, the following programmes are carried out: a programme of attention to rural areas, school projects, attention to young persons not attending school, cultural minorities and the itinerant population. The LOGSE introduces changes in the sort of attention given to these groups, because it has a policy of integration within the system itself, not only providing specific programmes parallel to the system. It also envisages that the system itself can provide mechanisms to make effective the principle of equal opportunities. The main lines of work deal with organisation and the curriculum.

The **scholarships and grants** aim at providing those pupils lacking the economic means with the necessary resources to go on with their schooling. In 1983, the scholarship policy general guidelines were modified and adjusted to the democratic principles of equality and solidarity.

The **education of pupils with special educational needs** is one of the fields that most has changed between 1970 and 1990, not only in its regulation, but also in its approach. The key steps of this change are due to the LGE which inherited the principles prevailing in special education 20 years ago; the Act for the Social Integration of the Handicapped of 1982 and the Royal Decree 334/1985 for the arrangement of Special Education, where the principles for normalisation and integration are regulated and the LOGSE which reinforces and extends the idea of integrating these pupils in ordinary schools.

Until 1982, the school called these pupils "retarded" and "misfits" and the only provision made was to put them apart from the ordinary school system, keeping them in special classes and offering them simply welfare services.

Following the Act for the Social Integration of the Handicapped, the prevailing idea is that, as far as possible, these pupils must be integrated in the ordinary education system. With the Royal Decree of 1985, special education is no longer understood as a different kind of education given to pupils because of their handicaps, and it is beginning to be considered as an integral part of the education system, with a set of supports and adjustments in the ordinary school system. Special education is informed by the principles of **normalisation and integration**. The LOGSE introduces the concept of "pupils with special educational needs" in the educational field as an alternative to words like "deficient", "retarded" or "disabled". In that way, a situation of mere welfare provision has been turned into one of educational intervention.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

In the last decade, economic, human and organisational resources have been made available to make provision for the right of all pupils to educational and personal guidance and careers advice, as stated in Spanish law since 1970.

The LOGSE includes various measures to adjust the internal and external school support to the new arrangement and philosophy of the education system (new structure, integration of pupils with special educational needs, an open curricular model, attention to diversity, etc.). It also has paid special attention to the guidance of pupils at those stages where they have to choose from different options and at the end of the most important levels. After the policy of state decentralisation, the guidance services and other supports to schools have been transferred to the Autonomous Communities, and now they can make their own provision.

The LOGSE has created a new organisational and functional model of **guidance**, which leaves each Autonomous Community free to set up its own bodies for this service. In most of the Autonomous Communities, guidance is given at the following three levels:

- at classroom level, through the **tutorship**, consolidating the tutorial function of teachers at all stages;
- at school level, through the **guidance unit or department**. This Act introduces provisions for a guidance department at all secondary schools financed with public funds. All secondary school teachers have had courses in educational psychology for this reason;
- in the education system as a whole, through the **area teams of educational and psychological guidance** (EOEP). These teams, since their creation in 1980, represent the final reshaping of the previous support provided for the area guidance services. The EOEPs integrate the former support services and give counselling services and help at the various school levels. They are made up of psychologists, educationists, social workers and primary school teachers specialised in certain subjects.

Amongst the most relevant reforms concerning **other internal and external school support services**, the fact that the schools have been provided **with support teachers for the integration** of pupils with special educational needs in ordinary classrooms, and also assistant teachers for ordinary teaching is the most outstanding aspect. Secondly, attention should be drawn to the unification in 1994 of the Resource Centres and Teachers' In-Service Training Centres into the so-called **Teachers' and Resource Centres**. This means a new organisational model of external support to teachers and schools, and the encouragement of collaboration with the universities.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

Until the enactment of the LOGSE, there was no explicit concern about a **systematic and formal evaluation of the education system, the teaching profession or the curriculum.** Supervision has traditionally been provided by the education inspectorate. With this Act, there is an important change in this respect, as there is an explicit statement about evaluation addressed to the on-going adjustment of the education system to social demands and educational needs. It also considers evaluation as the keystone for the improvement of the quality of education and it extends its field of activity to encompass pupils, teachers, schools, educational processes and the administration itself. Mention should also be made of the Law enacting the creation of the Institute for Quality and Evaluation (INCE), a state agency responsible for the on-going evaluation of the education system and in which the Autonomous Communities also have their say.

Regarding **school evaluation**, with the LODE there is a change from a rigid and secretive notion about the evaluation of schools to a more sharing one, providing the school council with the functions of self-evaluation and supervision of the school.

The **Inspectorate** has since 1970 been the institution responsible for the control and supervision of educational activities in schools. However, the allocation of new functions and the changes in its composition and the means of access to it are the main points on which reforms have focused. The most crucial changes undergone by the education inspectorate in the last ten years are the adjustment of the inspectorate services to the Autonomous Communities system, with the subsequent transfer of powers, and the creation of a state coordinating agency (the High Inspectorate of the state); the integration into one body of inspectors from three different bodies (primary school, baccalaureate and vocational training inspectors) creating a more generalist model; changes in their functions, going from the primacy of directive and controlling functions to those of supervisors, counsellors and advisors to teaching staff; and the system of access to the inspectorate which in the past was through a competitive examination and now is through advertisements to which primary and secondary school teachers can apply for a post as inspector.

In the LOGSE there is a change in the general approach to the inspectorate, considering it as one of the key elements that can promote the quality of teaching, which is why new functions and attributions have been given to it in accordance with that approach: to carry out a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of schools, information and orientation activities for all the different sectors of the educational community, and to collaborate in all the processes of educational change.

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FRANCE

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

For public education in France, the 1984-94 period was marked above all by the completion of the process of the democratisation of education.

1. This process, which has enabled the great majority of each age cohort of children to benefit from full schooling, has been under way since the beginning of the 1970s. Whereas the potential school population (i.e. those between 2 and 22 years) has been steadily falling,[1] the number of pupils actually attending school has been rising continuously. The enrolment rate for the 2 to 22 age group rose from 72.7% in 1970/71 to 79.8% in 1980/81, 86% in 1991/92 and 88.7% in 1993/94.

   The *Collèges d'enseignement secondaire* (CES – lower secondary schools) were faced with the process of the democratisation of education during the 1970s. During the 1980s, the *lycées* (upper secondary schools) had to adapt to the **phenomenon of "mass education"**. As a result, the number of pupils in general and technological secondary education rose from 1.1 million in 1980/81 to 1.5 million in 1989/90, a level at which it has stabilised. Finally, higher education is now also having to cope with rising student numbers, which have been accelerating since the beginning of the 1990s. Higher education catered for 1.1 million students in 1980/81; 1.7 million in 1990/91; 1.9 million in 1992/93; and over 2 million in 1993/94.

2. The process of democratisation has **brought about a real increase in the standard of education** of the general public, which is demonstrated by studies carried out when enlisting young people into national service. At the same time, these positive developments are also posing serious problems for the education system and are forcing it to make large-scale adjustments.

   Firstly, the process of democratisation has led to **higher costs**. The rising costs caused by an increased number of pupils have been exacerbated by the fact that such costs, per pupil or per student, rise with each successive level of education. Consequently, total public expenditure on the education system rose from 394 billion francs (1993 equivalent) in 1983 to 507 billion in 1993. As a proportion of total government spending, the education budget (schools and higher education) has been rising constantly since 1982. It increased from 17.5% in 1982 to 20% in 1993.

   Secondly, this changing trend is forcing the national education system to **adapt to a more diversified pupil mix**. Since all children of the same age now go to a *Collège* and the majority go on to *Lycée*, public schooling has become more diversified. It is catering for greater numbers than previously of young people from less-favoured backgrounds who frequently experience difficulties at school.

3. Confronted with this new situation, the education system is endeavouring to achieve two major objectives that can be difficult to reconcile. It must continue to select and **educate a sufficiently large "elite"**, which it has always managed to do. However, the system must at the same time **allow as many people as possible to achieve an adequate standard of education** in order to ensure satisfactory social integration, particularly through jobs.

   This dual concern has led the Ministry of Education to set quantitative objectives which it must strive to attain. Under the terms of the Framework Law on Education of 1989, the education system has to ensure that, by the year 2000, all pupils of the same age cohort obtain a recognised level of qualification (at least the vocational aptitude certificate CAP *(Certificat d'aptitude professionnel)* or the vocational studies certificate BEP *(Brevet d'études professionnelles))* and that 80% attain the level of the BAC *(Baccalauréat)*.

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[1] The figure was 17.6 million in 1970/71; 17.4 million in 1980/81; and 16.5 million in 1992/93.

Recent developments with respect to these objectives include the following:

- The percentage of pupils reaching BAC level has been growing steadily since 1983, when the figure was 35%. By the beginning of the 1993 school year, this percentage had risen to 62.6%. At the same time, there was a very sharp increase in the percentage of pupils passing the BAC. In 1993, 54.7% of young people in the same age-bracket passed the BAC compared with under 33% in 1986. This increase can be largely attributed to the creation of the vocational BAC (see below).
- The number of young people leaving school with no qualifications, a category which is expected eventually to disappear, is steadily diminishing. In 1988, 12.9% of pupils left the education system without any qualifications, whereas by 1993 this percentage was no more than 8.3%.

4. The education system is therefore still confronted with a high **school failure** rate which several indicators during the pupil's school career have confirmed (results of national assessments at level CE2 – age 8 – and in the first and fifth years of secondary school; late entries to the *Collège*; leaving without any qualification etc.).

The democratisation of education and the resulting high rate of school failure have forced new adjustments to the French education system. Between 1984 and 1994, a great many initiatives were launched in which the structure and organisation of the education system were modified, as were teacher-training arrangements.

Furthermore, the French education system adapted and modernised the content and organisation of syllabi in order to offer all pupils a branch of education enabling them to complete their school careers successfully.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. ADAPTATION OF EDUCATION STRUCTURES

As regards the structure and organisation of education, the objective has been to bring decision-making closer to the level concerned and to increase the responsibilities of decision-makers and others involved at local level. A large number of powers have therefore been transferred to the regional level of education administration *(Académies)*. Furthermore, schools have been granted greater autonomy to adapt their methods and objectives to suit their own particular circumstances.

1.1. DECENTRALISATION

The 1982 and 1983 laws on decentralisation concerned the education sector in particular.

The education system was already partially decentralised prior to the enactment of these laws. *Communes* (district councils) were in charge of running and maintaining primary schools. In addition they were responsible for financing building works with state grants. The regional councils *(Conseils généraux)* also contributed towards building and maintenance work for primary schools and *Collèges* but without intervening in the decision-making process.

Under the decentralisation laws, the responsibility for building, maintaining and running schools in general has now been transferred to local authorities *(communes* for primary schools, *départements* for *Collèges* and regions for *Lycées)*.

This devolution of powers has led to financial transfers from the state (in the form of grants) for both operating and equipment costs. It should be said in this context that there is nothing to stop local authorities from using their own resources to top up these grants for funding school expenditure.

The new powers attributed to local authorities must be combined with those retained by the state. No local authority is allowed to decide to build a school unless the state has undertaken to allocate the necessary posts to run it. In this way, the distribution of schools is subject to an agreement between the state and the competent authorities. The power to create new schools is therefore shared (the state also retaining the power to decide on the creation of a new school, without the agreement of the local authority, where public service requirements dictate, even though the latter is required to finance it).

In addition, the *départements* and *communes* are responsible for school transport.

The state itself retains exclusive powers over staff management as well as over regulations and curricula. It is therefore still responsible for expenditure on education and staff.

Generally speaking, it would appear that local authorities have often exceeded their statutory obligations in this field by financing a variety of initiatives. These include extra-curricular activities, support teaching for pupils experiencing difficulty, helping pupils learn to read, and artistic and sporting activities.

These various developments have increased the local authority share of funding for education.[2] They now finance 20.4% of educational activities (in 1993), compared with 14% in 1975. By contrast, the state share diminished from 70% in 1975 to 63.1% in 1993. (In 1993, the share from other sources of finance was 10.9% from households and 4.9% from business.)

1.2. DEVOLUTION AND REFORM OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Major deconcentration measures have been carried out in parallel with decentralisation. Whilst the central administration has to focus on planning, promotion, coordination and control tasks, execution and management must in principle be devolved to deconcentrated services.

Such deconcentration has now reached a significant level, extending from school organisation to the pedagogical structure and the use of resources. Most of the responsibility for managing teaching and non-teaching staff has been delegated to *Recteurs* (heads of the administrative unit or district) in accordance with the Decree of 21 August 1985. Nevertheless the management (including transfers) of category A staff still remains centralised.

This deconcentration has mainly worked out for the benefit of *Recteurs*. It has also increased, though to a lesser degree, the role of school inspectors who, as heads of unit in the *départements*, have wide powers mainly in the area of primary education.

This deconcentration has been accompanied by a reform in the territorial inspection of the national education system. A single body of regional inspectors (now known as *Inspecteurs pédagogiques régionaux-inspecteurs d'académie*, IPR-IA) was created by the Decree of 18 July 1990. Certain IPRs may be seconded to the post of *Inspecteur d'académie directeur des services départementaux de l'Éducation nationale* (inspector of schools acting as director of the Ministry of Education's services for the *département*). Functions previously assumed at regional education officer level by public officials from various *corps* (for example in-service training for regional education authority staff) will henceforth be entrusted to IPR-IAs.

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[2] The *communes*, which finance mainly non-teaching staff at primary level, provide the great bulk of funding.

The same Decree of July 1990 created the *corps* of state education inspectors, *Inspecteurs de l'Éducation nationale* - IEN (which replaced various other *corps* such as that of inspectors for the *département).* These IENs are generally responsible for a primary education district.

The staff of the central administration has gradually been reduced but its main structures (departments and directorates) have so far been maintained.

1.3. POLICY OF AUTONOMY FOR SCHOOLS

1.3.1. NEW STATUS FOR SCHOOLS

Secondary schools have now been given a new status (whereas the management of primary schools remains under the authority of the *communes*). Under the terms of Decree 85-924 of 30 August 1985, *collèges* and *lycées* have become local public schools *(établissement public locaux d'enseignement* - EPLE). Prior to this they were national public schools *(établissements publics nationaux).* Their new status gives them greater autonomy to adapt to their own specific circumstances.

These EPLEs, which benefit from legal and financial autonomy, are administered by a *conseil d'administration* and the school head. The *conseil d'administration*, chaired by the school head, is comprised of representatives of the local authorities and school management, qualified individuals, pupil and parent representatives, as well as staff representatives. It lays down the principles for implementing the pedagogical and educational autonomy which these schools now have.

By virtue of the Decree of 1985, this autonomy covers:

- the organisation of the school into classes and groups of pupils;
- the use of teaching time allocations made available to the school in compliance with statutory timetables;
- the organisation of school time in accordance with statutory obligations;
- the school's openness to its social, cultural and economic environment;
- the school's specific choice of study areas to supplement national curricula;
- the organisation of optional activities.

Finally the *conseil d'administration* adopts the guidelines for the school's development plan.

The school head remains answerable to the hierarchy of the *Académie* but deals directly with the education authority to which the school is attached for financial and material management issues. The head is in charge of income and expenditure and has authority over school staff.

1.3.2. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

In application of the 1989 law governing education, schools (including primary schools) are required to draw up a school development plan *(projet d'établissement)* which defines "the specific procedures for implementing national objectives and programmes" by taking into consideration the diversity (particularly social and cultural) of the pupils for whom they cater, as well as their own local characteristics and resources. The school development plan therefore reflects the educational policy which an establishment has chosen to conduct independently. This plan may justify the allocation of specific resources by the regional education authority.

According to a survey carried out by the DEP[3] among school heads in 1991, almost all establishments have a development plan. Although 18% of school heads regard this as an administrative obligation, in more active schools (17%) the project has led to very widespread mobilisation, is the main priority of the management team and has involved setting up a monitoring mechanism. Other establishments give the plan a relatively lower priority.

Schools most frequently implement the development plan procedure to cater for pupils experiencing difficulty. Pupil monitoring and support is the most widespread reason for implementing the plan, whereas the more ambitious development plans focus on pedagogical methods and tools, and the organisation of the school, structures, and various subject options.

Collèges are the establishments most familiar with the development plan procedure, with upper secondary schools of general education *(lycées d'enseignement général)* being the least so.

1.3.3. CREATION OF *CORPS* OF SCHOOL HEADS

With the introduction of autonomy and decentralisation, the managerial staff of schools now assume wider-ranging and more complex responsibilities. It has therefore been necessary to alter their terms of recruitment. Formerly, these staff did not have specific conditions of service and were chosen from a list of suitable candidates and seconded from their original *corps*. Now they come under two *corps* created by the Decree of 11 April 1988 and are recruited either by competitive examination or from a list of suitable candidates.

1.4. EDUCATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS *(ZONES D'ÉDUCATION PRIORITAIRES* - ZEP)

The aim of educational priority areas, most of which were set up at the start of the 1982 school year, is to reinforce educational initiatives in socially-disadvantaged areas in order to improve pupils' academic results and to combat school failure.

1.4.1. The ZEP policy is based on a **global approach** to the problems encountered by pupils and goes beyond the boundaries of the school itself.

It marks a determination to break with the theory that the individual is solely responsible for school failure and to take into consideration the out-of-school context. In the same spirit, ZEPs encompass all existing levels of education in the area (from nursery schools to *lycées*) and involve a broad cross-section of players in the community carrying out their various activities in co-ordination. These participants include all of the schools in the area, local authorities, cultural and school support associations, parent associations, other administrative authorities (justice, police) and social participants. An educational area project is established in each ZEP and run by an official (usually a school head or a national education inspector).

1.4.2. The ZEP policy provides for the allocation of **supplementary resources** to teaching and non-teaching staff in terms of budgeted time, and in the budget for educational activities. The assessment and forecasting department of the Ministry of Education (DEP) was therefore able to ascertain in 1992 that the number of teaching hours per pupil in the ZEPs was greater than in the other schools, that schooling for two- and three-year-olds was more developed in ZEPs and that classes there were less crowded. In the 1993 budget, the ZEP policy represented 1.37 billion francs or 0.4% of the budget of the Ministry of Education.

The ZEP map drawn in 1990 (for three years) included 554 ZEPs situated in urban and also rural areas representing 9% of primary schools, 16% of CESs, 9% of vocational *lycées (lycées professionnels)* and 2% of *lycées*.

1.4.3. The ZEP policy implies the specific involvement of teaching teams. The establishment of **school development plans** is particularly important in ZEPs. Their implementation by teaching teams set up in line with these strategies is a goal which, though important, is difficult to achieve. Certain measures have already been taken. These include: staff appointment on the basis of a profile and the payment of a special hardship allowance *(indemnité de sujétions spéciales)* to teachers assigned to a ZEP. It is a matter of breaking with the practice of assigning novice or less well-trained teachers to the most difficult areas. From the pedagogical standpoint, it should be noted that new practices are being developed in the ZEPs (support activities, group working) and that the introduction of stages in primary education and of school development plans is more widespread in ZEPs than elsewhere.

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[3] DEP: *Direction de l'évaluation et de la prospective du ministère de l'Éducation nationale.*

1.4.4. As regards the **results** obtained from the ZEP policy, a DEP study carried out in 1992 shows that ZEPs have achieved the same positive effect in terms of academic results as other establishments. The percentage of pupils who are lagging significantly behind their age group by the end of primary school and the first year of secondary school has fallen sharply, as has the number of pupils choosing short vocational education up to the age of 16. However, there are still significant disparities between ZEPs and other schools. For instance, in 1992/93, 13.9% of ZEP pupils in the first year of secondary school were lagging behind their age group by more than two years, compared with 8.6% for CESs as a whole. However, the gap has not widened further even though ZEP pupils are being increasingly confronted with the sort of difficulties (e.g. unemployment) that can lead to school failure.

1.5. GREATER CONVERGENCE BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION

The share of pupils attending state schools has remained stable for the past ten years: around 86% in primary education and 79% in secondary education. Of pupils in the private education sector, 98% are attending a school that operates under a contract with the government which is responsible, in particular, for teachers' pay.

Various reforms have been carried out in relations between the state and private-sector education:

After several years of the status quo on this issue, various reforms were introduced in 1992 and 1993 which are leading to greater convergence between the two education sectors.

In June 1992, the government agreed to settle the dispute surrounding its participation in the operating costs of the private education sector, by allocating 1.8 billion francs towards its operating costs. Furthermore, the government decided to participate in improving the situation of staff in the private education sector (in particular by taking over responsibility for paying the salaries of assistant librarians and for reducing the teaching load of school heads).

In January 1993, an agreement between the government and the private education sector provided for secondary school teachers in private schools to be recruited henceforth by school heads from among teachers on a short-list of suitable candidates who successfully passed an entrance competition using the same examination as in the corresponding competitive entrance examination for state education. The June 1992 agreement made similar provisions for primary school teachers. (Previously, teachers in private schools were recruited directly by the school head on the strength of their qualifications.)

Furthermore, the 1993 agreement provided for teachers in the private sector to be trained under the same conditions as those in the state sector, with IUFMs *(Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* – university-based teacher training colleges) and private education sector organisations cooperating to provide this training. (Previously, teachers in private education did not have specific initial training but only continuing training where required.)

Finally, this agreement provides for teachers in private education, who were formerly remunerated as supply teachers in the national education sector, to be paid on the same basis as teachers of the same grade in state education.

2. IMPROVING TEACHER TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

Teacher recruitment and training procedures have also undergone a major reform intended to improve the training of teachers in order to cater for a more diversified pupil mix.

2.1. CREATION OF UNIVERSITY-BASED TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES (IUFM)

IUFMs, created by a 1989 law, now provide initial training for all primary and secondary school teachers. IUFMs replace the former teacher training structures *(Écoles normales d'instituteurs, Centres pédagogiques régionaux and Écoles normales d'apprentissage).* There are 28 of them *(one for each regional education authority),* each attached to a university.

2.1.1. OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of creating IUFMs was to **improve the training** of teachers by developing their professional skills (teaching techniques, subject teaching, etc.) together with academic skills.

It became particularly necessary to adapt the vocational training of teachers in view of the changing pupil population. The growing diversity of pupils at the various levels is a result of the present-day situation whereby all children in the age cohort attend a CES and a majority go on to a *lycée.* This pattern has changed the nature of the teaching profession which can no longer limit itself to transmitting knowledge to a selected population.

Although initial training for primary school teachers already contained a professional component, CES and *lycée* teachers previously had only one year of training in regional teaching centres which in the main only provided "on-the-job" training. Now training for all teachers at IUFMs includes observation placements and teaching practice in schools.

The second aim of creating IUFMs was to harmonise teacher training. By providing a minimum "common professional culture", the aim was to ensure better links between the various levels of education in the field. In the same spirit, future teachers will now all be recruited at BAC + 3 level (three years of higher education rather than BAC + 2 as was previously the case for primary school teachers and general education teachers at *collèges*).

2.1.2. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Applicants for admission to IUFMs must hold a bachelor's degree (BAC + 3) or other diploma certifying at least three or four years of post-secondary study. Student teachers are selected for admission into an IUFM by the director on the basis of their qualifications. When they are admitted, candidates indicate which competitive examination they intend to prepare for – primary or secondary school teaching. (There is a range of competitive examinations for secondary school teachers.)

The first year of IUFM is essentially devoted to preparing student teachers for the chosen competitive examination. Work on subject content is the most important feature of their training and takes place at university. However, observation placements and teaching practice in schools are included. A core section of the training is common to all candidates, whatever their chosen level and subject. Applicants sit the competitive examination at the end of the first year of IUFM. During the second year, successful applicants are considered as trainee teachers and receive a salary. The principal element of this second year of training is a period of school teaching practice *(stage en responsabilité)* during which trainees are assigned between four and six hours of classroom teaching per week. Primary school teachers complete a total of 500 placement hours during the course of their training, including eight weeks of school teaching practice (300 hours for secondary school teachers). The teaching diploma is awarded at the end of the second year of IUFM by a board of examiners convened by the Recteur. The board makes its decision on the basis of the dossiers transmitted by the IUFM, taking into account the placements organised during the training course.

2.1.3. APPRAISAL OF THE REFORM

According to a survey carried out by the DEP in 1993 among student teachers at IUFMs, most future teachers claimed to be very satisfied with the practical training placements organised. By contrast, training in teacher/pupil relationships (child psychology, knowledge of child populations, and expression and communication techniques) was considered least good. Most new teachers deemed the principle of common core training for primary and secondary school teachers to be of little benefit. As regards the primary motivation of future teachers, more said their main interest was to pass on knowledge than was the case in the previous 1991 survey. However, the principal motivation (for 71% of aspiring teachers) remained their interest in the subject they wished to teach.

2.2. ENHANCING THE STATUS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

As from 1989, major measures have been undertaken to enhance the status of the teaching profession:

- speeding up promotion from one step to another at the beginning of a teacher's career;
- grade-related advancement;
- improving the system of compensatory allowances for extra duties and more difficult teaching jobs (in ZEPs for example);
- improving opportunities for change of occupation – one-year's paid leave *(congé de mobilité)* for 6 000 teachers per year to take a year's training for another occupation;
- setting up, for primary teachers, a teaching *corps* of "*professeurs des écoles*" with the same career profile as *professeurs certifiés* (qualified teachers).

2.3. INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF POSTS OFFERED IN COMPETITIVE RECRUITMENT EXAMINATIONS

Because of the democratisation of secondary education, anticipated recruitment needs are considerable. According to the "development scenario for the education system up to the year 2000" drawn up in 1993, there will be an annual recruitment requirement of 32 000 teachers for several consecutive years.

In addition to raising teachers' pay, a variety of other measures have been taken to facilitate recruitment. These include:

- introducing allowances for students applying for competitive recruitment examinations, in line with the needs of the various regional education authorities;
- increasing and regularising the number of posts offered at competitive examinations: as a result 41 000 posts were offered in 1993 as opposed to 21 000 in 1988 (33 000 successful applicants in 1993).

3. ADAPTING AND MODERNISING CURRICULA

3.1. MODERNISING CURRICULA AND THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

3.1.1. INTRODUCTION OF MODERN LANGUAGES INTO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Modern language teaching for pupils in the final two-year stage of primary education *(cours moyen* – CM) was introduced on an experimental basis at the beginning of the 1989 school year. Modern language teaching was gradually extended throughout the primary school system at the beginning of the 1992 school year, with priority being given to pupils in the final year of primary schooling.

Given that the main aim of modern language teaching at primary school is to prepare pupils for choosing the language they will be studying during their first year of secondary school, priority is given to aural comprehension. Pupils are taught either by *instituteurs/professeurs d'école*, or by secondary school teachers or personnel from outside the school.

At the beginning of the 1993 school year, 16% of primary school pupils in the first year of the *cours moyen* and 42% entering their final year of primary school were learning a modern language. Some 77% of the pupils concerned chose English and 16% German.

3.1.2. INTRODUCTION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

As part of the 1985 "computing for all" plan, *CESs* and *lycées* were provided with computer equipment and some of the teaching staff were trained in computer skills. Computer science can be studied as a technological subject in its own right or used as a teaching tool.

3.1.3. CREATION OF "EUROPEAN SECTIONS"

European sections were introduced at the beginning of the 1992 school year and are intended for pupils who wish to gain mastery of a foreign language that approaches a bilingual standard.

In contrast with international sections, European sections are allowed to include only French pupils and the curricula are drawn up solely within the framework of the French education system. Schooling in European sections is accredited by a special mention on the *BAC* diploma.

Recteurs are responsible for deciding to open and operate such sections. European sections have to be organised in compliance with a set of rules. These state that schooling must normally begin in the third year of secondary school (first year in some *collèges)*. For the first two years, more class time must be dedicated to the language of the section. As from the fourth year, European sections must teach a basic non-language subject in the language of the section.

The other arrangements for organising such sections (e.g. pupil selection) are left to the discretion of school heads under the authority of the *Recteurs*. A special drive has been organised to attract qualified and motivated teaching staff for European sections.

By the beginning of the 1994 school year, over 500 sections were in operation both at *CESs* and *lycées* in over 400 schools. Some 48% of these sections taught English and 36% German. In total these sections currently include over 20 000 pupils.

3.1.4. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL TIME IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Since the decree of April 1991, inspectors of schools acting as directors of Ministry of Education units for the *département* are, under certain circumstances, allowed to adapt the primary school timetable to suit the diversity of factors in the lives of children and their families. As a result, a growing number of primary schools (15% of pupils in the second two-year stage – *cours élémentaire* (CE) – in 1993) are organising the school week over four days. This has led to school holidays being reduced by 12 days in order to comply with the statutory number of teaching hours.

3.1.5. PUPIL PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

Various measures have been introduced to ensure that pupils are full partners in the education system. These include the creation of a *conseil des délégues des élèves* (pupil representatives' committee) in *lycées* (1989 law governing education), the creation of *conseils académiques de la vie lycéenne* (regional education authority committees on *lycée* life) and the participation of *lycée* pupils in the *Conseil supérieur de l'éducation* (highest French consultative and disciplinary body for education).

3.2. ADAPTING CURRICULA TO THE DEMOCRATISATION PROCESS

3.2.1. PRIMARY SCHOOL STAGES

Primary schooling has been organised into three stages since 1 January 1992 when these were introduced throughout the system:

- the **initial learning** stage *(cycle des apprentissages premiers)* which corresponds to nursery school;
- the **core learning** stage *(cycle des apprentissages fondamentaux)* which includes the final year of nursery school and the first two years of primary education;
- the **in-depth learning** stage *(cycle des approfondissements)* which corresponds to the final three years of primary education.

The aim of these stages is to make the education system more suited to the diversity of children's needs and pace of development. Pupil attainment targets are set not for each year but for each stage. Pupil assessment is only carried out at the end of the stage.

This is a way of avoiding a "guillotine" assessment being carried out every year and leading to certain pupils being held back a year without taking into account the diversity in pupils' rates of learning. One particular aim is to avoid pupils having to repeat during the *cours préparatoire* since it is widely acknowledged that this has a particularly discriminatory effect. Indeed, 90% of pupils who have to do so fail to reach the fifth year of secondary school. Nevertheless, it is possible for one of the two primary education stages to be reduced or extended by one year.

Adapting to this reform has involved major changes in teaching practices, as follows.

- It requires teachers in the same stage to work together as a team. (Committees for each stage have been set up for this purpose.)
- It has also meant changing the way teaching is organised. The class remains the system's basic unit but variants may be introduced. It is now possible to organise pupil groups for certain subjects on the basis of teacher exchanges which allow pupils to benefit from lessons that are either more intensive or adapted to their level of learning (for example, a pupil in the final year of primary school may, in a given subject, benefit from a course at *cours élémentaire* year 2 level if it corresponds better to his or her own personal level in the subject). However, these non-standard lessons must not exceed three hours per week during the core learning stage and six hours during the in-depth learning stage. More generally, implementing the stages in line with the regulations calls for more diversified educational practices.

Although it is in theory mandatory for each of the 56 000 schools to introduce stages, clearly in practice the policy can only be implemented gradually. Indeed, this reform implies the support and personal involvement of teachers as well as a determination on their part to develop their teaching practice in the direction of more individualised education.

Despite the difficulties in implementing the policy of stages, the latter has met with widespread approval from teacher unions and parents' associations. The "New Contract for Schools", a compilation of decisions taken by the Ministry of Education in 1994, states that a "timetable has been established for the effective implementation of the stages". Furthermore, new primary school curricula published in February 1995 were developed in line with the stages.

3.2.2. EDUCATIONAL REFORM OF *LYCÉES*

The educational reform of *lycées* was established by the Decree of 17 January 1992 and came into force at the beginning of the 1992 school year for the fifth year, in 1993 for the sixth year, and in 1994 for the terminal class. The first examination for the new BAC took place in 1995. This reform pursues two main objectives:

- The primary aim was to **put an end to the hierarchy** which existed within the education system **between branches of education, as well as between subjects.**

The scientific education option leading to the *BAC C* was greatly esteemed both by families and by the most prestigious higher education institutions. Such a hierarchy had several negative consequences.

- It induced pupils to choose options that did not necessarily correspond to their own real aspirations and abilities.
- It was an obstacle to democratisation since a lower proportion of children from disadvantaged backgrounds went into this branch.
- Finally, since this "superior course" was based on a high standard of mathematics, it led to a certain dominance by mathematics purely for purposes of selection and not justified by the actual qualifications demanded for most jobs.

At the end of the reform, each of the various courses offered in general and technological education must represent a superior course for each pupil.

The number of courses has been reduced to three for general education (compared with seven previously) and four for technological education (compared with 16).

The three general education courses now include:

- the literary series (L)
- the scientific series (S)
- the economic and social series (ES)

and for technological education:

- the medical and social sciences series (SMS)
- the industrial science and technology series (STI)
- the laboratory science and technology series (STL)
- the tertiary science and technology series (STT).

The core subjects identify each of the series within the two subject options. For the "economic and social" series (ES) for example, the core subjects are economic and social sciences, applied mathematics, human sciences and languages.

The success of this reform depends on the attitude of families and teaching staff. It also requires the various branches of higher education to change the recruitment criteria for *baccalauréat* holders. (For instance, it will not be possible to enhance the status of the literary subject option without changing the selection criteria for faculties of medicine and the *grandes écoles*, which must focus less heavily on the level obtained in mathematics).

The second major aim of the reform of *lycées* is to **make more allowance for the diversity of pupils and of classes**. After the CESs, it is now the turn of the lycées to rise to the challenge of the democratisation of education which is resulting in a more diversified pupil mix. Education has to be varied to cater for this diversity of pupils. The policy of reforming *lycées* therefore provides for greater flexibility both in the organisation of lessons (modules) and in the guidance process.

In order to cater better for the specific needs of each pupil, part of the school timetable during the fifth and sixth years is devoted to teaching pupils in small groups known as **modules**. This teaching in modules consists of three hours per week during the fifth year and two hours during the sixth. In the fifth year the module is focused on the four core subjects: French, mathematics, the first modern language and history/geography. In the sixth year, one hour is devoted to the core subject in the series and one hour to another chosen by the teaching team in each school. This system of teaching in modular groups enables teachers to cater better for the wide diversity of pupils, mainly by varying their teaching techniques.

A further aim of the reform is to **gradually guide** each pupil towards educational choices that are **right for him as an individual**. In order to ensure that guidance is gradual (and thereby allow for each pupil's individual level of maturity) there is no subject specialisation during the fifth year, which is considered to be the "decisive stage". The greater part of the timetable is comprised of a common core curriculum. The optional subjects (from which each pupil is obliged to choose two) must help the pupil to identify his centres of interest (and no option is imposed for access to a sixth year series).

The sixth year and the terminal class comprise the "terminal stage". During the sixth year, pupils are obliged to choose one option. Finally, the terminal class syllabus includes (in addition to compulsory subjects and optional subjects) "specialist subjects" which enable pupils to choose their study profile. In the L series, for example, the specialist subjects which pupils can choose from (a third modern language, ancient languages, mathematics or arts) lead to four different profiles: literature-languages/literature-classics/literature-arts/literature-sciences.

3.2.3. REFORM OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Technological and vocational education cater for pupil diversity, in that some young people do not wish (or are unable) to continue a long course of study which requires abstract thought. In principle such education must lead to success and social advancement.

Nevertheless, the existence of this branch threatens to involve a certain segregation between pupils. Indeed, the guidance of pupils towards technological and vocational education is rarely seen as positive and is frequently the result of their failure in general education or rejection of it. Pupils are being guided towards this type of education with a defeatist approach at a time when the employment market, and society in general, accord greater value to intellectual occupations catered for by the general education branch.

In order to avoid technological and vocational education becoming segregated, education authorities must introduce suitable curricula (which consequently should differ from those of general education) whilst avoiding too great a gulf between vocational and general education.

To this end, reforms have been implemented in order to:

- **increase the number of "gateways"** at the various levels, to offer pupils in technological and vocational education the possibility of returning to general education when required;
- **increase the proportion of general education subjects** in the technological and vocational curriculum in order to harmonise the various educational branches and permit pupils to take maximum advantage of the gateways open towards general education.

THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR TECHNOLOGICAL CLASSES

Third and fourth year technological classes were created in 1985. The aim of technological classes alongside general education is to create a new branch in which pupils can succeed, based on an alternative educational approach that is able to guide pupils towards technological education in a positive manner.

For pupils who are happier with a more practical approach, these classes offer an education in which technology plays a unifying role, with all the subjects contributing to a technical project. Technological education is organised into three main areas: automotive mechanics; electronics and industrial computing; and economics and management, including the use of computer skills and education about the workplace. These classes which were originally introduced into the *lycées professionnels* (vocational *lycées)* led almost exclusively to the CAP or the BEP. In recent years, they have been progressively opened in the *collèges*, with a shift towards multidisciplinarity in order to offer pupils a greater choice of options (general, technological or vocational education) with the opportunity to return to general education if they wish.

In 1992/93, the numbers of pupils in technological classes were:

- 83 000 children in the third year T (or 8.1% of the pupils who were previously in the second year);
- 78 000 children in the fourth year T.

At the end of the 1991/92 school year, almost 70% of the pupils in the fourth year T entered the first year of BEP or CAP and 26.8% left the education system. Only 1.6% of these pupils entered the fifth year.

CREATION OF THE BAC PROFESSIONNEL (VOCATIONAL *BACCALAURÉAT)*

Created by a 1985 law and awarded for the first time in 1987, the vocational BAC is primarily intended to allow pupils to enter the workplace upon leaving school. Although nothing prevents this diploma from leading on to short-term higher technological education, it differs from the technological BAC (BAC *technologique*) which is designed to lead on to training in a *Section de Techniciens Spécialisés* (higher technical section) or an *Institut Universitaire de Technologie* (university institute of technology). The vocational BAC, involving two years of study in a vocational *lycée* following the BEP, is essentially intended for pupils who have passed the BEP and are seeking short-term technological education.

In 1993, 51 000 pupils were awarded the vocational BAC (out of a total of 446 000 sitting all the various types of BAC examination). The success rate for the vocational BAC was 72% in 1993 (compared with 74.2% for the general BAC and 67% for the technological BAC). New vocational BACs are regularly being created in line with the requirements of the various economic sectors. In the 1993 examinations, there were 32 different vocational BAC specialisations.

THIRD AND FOURTH YEAR INSERTION CLASSES

The 1989 law governing education abolished the guidance level which offered pupils the option of entering pre-vocational educational at the end of the second year in favour of channelling all pupils on through general education until the end of the fourth year. However, pre-vocational classes *(classes préprofessionnelles de niveau and classes préparatoires à l'apprentissage)* which catered for pupils experiencing difficulty and normally led to a CAP after three years following the second year, are gradually being abandoned.

Some pupils experiencing difficulty can now enter a third year adapted class (**quatrième aménagée**) and a fourth year insertion class (**troisième d'insertion**). The introduction of these became necessary to prevent the pupils concerned from entering third and fourth year technological classes which are not geared to their needs. The new classes are meant to become an option for success in parallel with the general option (see above).

The new insertion classes permit greater individualisation of teaching due to smaller classes. A "contract-based education" approach permits pupils to draw up their own personal education and career strategy. In fourth year insertion classes, classroom teaching alternates with job placements.

The objective of these classes is to enable pupils to go on after the fourth year to two years of study leading to a CAP (whereas the former three-year CAP starting from the second year has disappeared).

Third year "adapted classes" were introduced at the beginning of the 1991 school year. They catered for 16 000 pupils during the 1993/94 school year. Fourth year insertion classes were started at the beginning of the 1992 school year and involved 10 000 pupils in 1993/94. (The CCPNs and CPAs still catered for 8 700 pupils in the 1993/94 school year.)

Furthermore, since the **brevet** which accredits training at the end of the fourth year is too ambitious for pupils experiencing severe difficulty, pupils in fourth year insertion classes (as well as pupils in special education) may now take the *certificat de formation générale* (certificate of general education) which gives them cumulative credits that can be used towards a CAP.

REFORM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education is designed to cater for children with handicaps (sensory, motor or mental) as well as pupils experiencing major academic problems. This branch catered for some 120 000 pupils in 1992/93.

In 1991, *classes d'intégration scolaire* (integrated education classes) aimed at handicapped children were created in primary education and are integrated into primary schools. The maximum number of pupils in each class is 12.

During secondary education, *sections d'éducation spécialisées* (special education sections) for pupils experiencing major difficulties underwent sweeping reforms in 1989/90. They were transformed into *sections d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté* (special general and vocational education) and integrated into the *collèges*. They are intended to help pupils define their career plans and study for a CAP. A 1990 memorandum provided pupils with the possibility of extending their schooling in such classes up to the age of 18.

Other pupils in special education enter *établissements régionaux d'enseignement adapté* (regional special schools) which have boarding facilities and extra medical and teaching staff.

3.2.4. PUPIL EVALUATION

The Ministry of Education has made assessment of the education system a priority issue. This policy has led to the introduction of a diagnostic assessment for pupils. Since 1989, all pupils have been assessed in French and mathematics at the beginning of their second year of the primary *cours élémentaire* and at the beginning of their first year of secondary school.

The objective of this operation is two-fold:

- to allow comparisons to be made in time and space and to adapt ministerial policies accordingly;
- to enable teachers to adapt their teaching methods to the needs of each pupil, in particular by organising groups to provide more individualised teaching.

Since 1992, an assessment has been made of all pupils in the fifth year secondary in the core subjects (French, mathematics, history/geography and the first modern language in general education). This assessment forms an integral part of the reform of *lycées*. The results of the tests are an essential tool for organising teaching in modules.

Furthermore, this appraisal policy involves training teachers in assessment techniques to enable them to adapt their teaching in line with the test results.

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IRELAND

REFORMS AT PRIMARY LEVEL IN THE COMPULSORY SCHOOLING AGE PERIOD 6-12 YEARS

At primary level, no reform has taken place which would satisfy the definition of educational reform as set out in the introduction to the present publication.

During the period 1984-94 no educational legislation was enacted for primary education. However a number of initiatives took place over the period in question which might be said to satisfy the first part of the definition. There were improvements in the staffing of schools and in financial provision and other initiatives aimed at improving the general infrastructure of the system but which could not be said to be reforms of the system. One such initiative was the introduction of the Home/School/Community Liaison Scheme in 1990 in order to counteract disadvantage by increasing co-operation between schools, parents and other community agencies in the education of young people.

A Green Paper on Education was published in 1992 which set out a wide range of policy options for the reform of the system. This paper began a process of great public debate and consultation with the partners on the future of the educational system. This process led to the National Education Convention which took place in October 1993. It brought together representatives of 42 organisations – educational bodies, the social partners and the Department of Education – to engage in structured and sustained discussion on key issues of educational policy in Ireland.

REFORMS AT POST-PRIMARY LEVEL IN THE COMPULSORY SCHOOLING PERIOD, AGE 12-15 YEARS

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

1989 Junior Certificate introduced, replacing the Intermediate and Day Vocational Examinations in 1992.

New syllabi in the discrete disciplines were planned and introduced, starting in 1989.

The reforms were introduced on a phased basis after due consultation with the partners and following an extensive in-career development of the teachers.

The Junior Certificate was examined for the first time in 1992.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The reform of discrete disciplines constituting the Junior Certificate curriculum was and continues to be motivated by:

- the objective of facilitating the easy transistion of primary school pupils into the secondary level;
- adapting these discrete subjects to specific levels in order to meet the learning capacities of the pupil cohort;
- developing further composite educational disciplines to meet the needs of society and the job skills of pupils who sometimes leave mainstream education at the end of compulsory schooling, e.g. Environmental and Social Studies (ESS); Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE); the Junior Certificate School Programme; Technology; Junior Certificate Science Local Studies.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Decision making, at central level follows from consultation of all the partners.
- Implementation of reformed syllabi is, within broad guidelines, the responsibility of the teachers and the schools after due in-career development programmes.
- Financing is from central government sources.

3. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

- Rationalisation of schools is in progress in the amalgamation of some secondary level schools to better meet local clients' needs;
- schools are encouraged to establish boards of management;
- school boards of management are expected to be representative of all the stakeholders;
- the organisation of the school's teaching staff, while essentially the function of institutional management, is driven by curricular objectives and the institution's mission;
- the principal (headteacher) is responsible, under the board of management, for the day-to-day running of the school.

4. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Transition to secondary level schooling occurs at about age 12 but may vary.
- The first phase of secondary level education lasts three years and does not always end before the pupil reaches 15 years chronological age.
- This Junior Cycle secondary phase is uniform throughout the whole secondary system.
- In September 1989, the **Junior Certificate Programme** was introduced into all secondary level schools (see Note). This national programme was designed to cater for all recognised pupils aged 12 to 15 years, in the final stage of the compulsory period of education. The first award of the Junior Certificate took place in June 1992.
- The new programme replaced two former national programmes, the Day Vocational (Group) Certificate and the Intermediate Certificate. The Junior Certificate programme was designed to provide a common, broad and balanced education to all pupils, drawing on the positive elements of its predecessors but transcending the perceived vocational and academic bias (respectively) of those programmes.

  Each subject within the Junior Certificate is offered at two levels – Ordinary and Higher. In the case of Irish, English and Mathematics, a Foundation level is also provided. The choice of levels is designed to help cater for the variety of student achievement and aptitude. The underpinning principle of the Junior Certificate is to provide a comprehensive, common curriculum in all schools, within which a variety of experiences could be provided to reflect the needs students in different schools.

- No fundamental restructuring of school organisational arrangements, at national or local level, was implied in the new programme: established patterns of school terms, holidays, internal timetabling etc. were maintained.
- Pupils completing the Junior Cycle, may on completion of the appropriate examination, obtain a Junior Certificate which states the grades obtained in the examination subjects taken.
- The academic year has three terms and lasts 180 days.
- Pupils are facilitated to attend local schools within agreed catchment areas but exceptions are considered and accommodated.

5. CURRICULUM

- The educational objectives of Compulsory Education may be summarised as being directed to duly and appropriately socialise such pupils who seek to leave full-time education at the age of 15 and also seek to attract them to continue therein to complete the secondary level senior cycle.
- The curricular model is that of a centralised system. The Department of Education is advised by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment on all matters after due consultation with the major stakeholders. Institutions have considerable autonomy in the areas of choice and pedagogy.
- The Junior Certificate programme was set out in terms of overall aims, principles and features (see Note).
- The curricular approach adopted was to move from a centralised defined-content curriculum to one with more flexibility for local adaptation within a national framework.
- A phased process of syllabus revision was introduced with the new programme. All subjects underwent revision in the years 1988-92. Subjects were defined in terms of their associated elements of learning: knowledge, concepts and understanding, skills and attitudes. A common approach to the specification of syllabuses was introduced, incorporating a statement of aims and objectives, syllabus structure and content, differentiation and assessment objectives.
- Some rationalisation of subject provision was introduced, e.g. replacement of three business-related subjects by one Business Studies subject, harmonisation within a common syllabus structure of all modern European languages, provision of a single subject syllabus in Science etc. Two new subjects were introduced - Technology, and Environmental and Social Studies (ESS).
- All subjects in the Junior Certificate programme emphasise active learning methodologies – "learning by doing". This was seen as an essential point of distinction between the orientation of the new programme and that of the former Intermediate programme.
- Pupil performance in the Junior Certificate is assessed and certificated on a national basis by the Department of Education. The mode of assessment is almost entirely external, despite a number of efforts to introduce elements of school-based assessment as part of the Junior Certificate examination.
- Teaching methodology is determined by the individual teachers taking the totality of the syllabus into account.
- Terminal, written, centrally-monitored examinations are the norm.

6. TEACHING STAFF

- Entry conditions to initial training are determined by the training institutions, which are universities, thereby producing an all-graduate profession.
- Initial teacher training remains unaltered in its overall structure and provision. However, the introduction of the Junior Certificate programme has been reflected in changed orientation of many aspects of qualification programmes, particularly in methodologies sections of courses.
- The introduction of the Junior Certificate programme was accompanied by a national programme of in-service education for teachers of revised syllabuses. This involved the release of teachers from school duties for about two or three days each in respect of new syllabuses. This was the first time such release was authorised within the national system.
- The nature of the curriculum influences the specialisation choices of trainee teachers and also the employment conditions.
- In-service training is centrally organised by the In-career Development Unit of the Department of Education.
- Teachers are recruited by the managerial authorities of secondary level schools.
- Employment conditions are determined, inter alia, by contracts, occupational practice, institutional ethos and management structures and the guidelines laid down by the Department of Education.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

- Ethnic minorities of which there are few are accommodated within the system; the itinerant population is facilitated to ensure their participation in the educational process.
- Grants are available for a variety of purposes subject to certain conditions.
- Special education, e.g. for the hearing impaired, is available.

NOTE: THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

1. The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.

2. The Junior Certificate programme aims to
    - reinforce and further develop in the young person the knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies acquired at primary level;
    - extend and deepen the range and quality of the young person's educational experience in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies;
    - develop the young person's personal and social confidence, initiative and competence through a broad, well-balanced general education;
    - prepare the young person for the requirements of further programmes of study, of employment or of life outside full-time education;
    - contribute to the moral and spiritual development of the young person and to develop a tolerance and respect for the values and beliefs of others;
    - prepare the young person for the responsibilities of citizenship in the national context and in the context of the wider European Union.

3. The Junior Certificate programme is based on the following principles:
    - **breadth and balance**: in the final phase of compulsory schooling, every young person should have a wide range of educational experiences. Particular attention must be given to reinforcing and developing the skills of numeracy, literacy and oracy. Particular emphasis should be given to social and environmental education, science and technology and modern languages.
    - **relevance**: curriculum provision should address the immediate and prospective needs of the young person, in the context of the cultural, economic and social environment.
    - **quality**: every young person should be challenged to achieve the highest possible standards of excellence, with due regard to different aptitudes and abilities and to international comparisons.

    The curriculum should provide a wide range of educational experience within a supportive and formative environment. It should draw on the aesthetic and creative, the ethical, the linguistic, the mathematical, the physical, the scientific and technological, the social, environmental and political and the spiritual domains.

4. Each Junior Certificate syllabus is presented for implementation within the general curriculum context outlined above.

ITALY

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

Between 1984 and 1994, compulsory education in Italy has undergone major reforms which have profoundly altered the Italian school system.

The main reforms include:

- extension of the school timetable in lower secondary education (Ministerial Decree of 22 July 1983);
- introduction of new curricula for primary education (Presidential Decree No 104 of 12 February 1985 which came into force during the 1987/88 school year);
- reform in the organisation of primary education to permit full implementation of the new curricula (Law No 148 of 5 June 1990);
- reform in initial training for nursery and primary school teachers, although this has not yet come into force (Law No 341 of 19 November 1990);
- introduction of one compulsory foreign language into the curriculum for primary education (Ministerial Decree of 28 June 1991);
- framework law on the integration of handicapped people (Law No 104 of 5 May 1992);
- Law No 537 of 24 December 1993, which has not yet been carried into effect, will reform the administration of all mainstream schools.

As a result of these reforms, Italian education has adopted a European perspective and has adapted to recent socio-cultural developments. Indeed the changes that have been observed over recent years have confronted schools and all those involved with them (teachers, pupils and their families) with a new set of problems. Adapting to the European dimension has meant that Italy has had to comply with new quality standards and to introduce foreign languages into primary education as well as university training for nursery and primary teachers.

The most substantial and significant reforms to have occurred between 1984 and 1994 were those involving primary education curricula (Presidential Decree No 104 of 12 February 1985) and methods of organising primary education (Law No 148 of 5 June 1990).

These reforms have given primary education a definitive structure and are based on an implementation of the constitutional decree on education for individuals and citizens. Indeed the aim of primary education is to promote "cultural literacy". As part of the social training essential to the development of a child's personality, primary education contributes in great measure to "removing the economic and social obstacles which limit citizens' liberty and equality and thereby stand in the way of a person's full development" (Article 3 of the Italian Constitution).

Other reforms include:

- an extension of the school timetable in lower secondary education, as established by the Ministerial Decree of 22 July 1983 - which included class hours, integration activities and optional courses into the class council's teaching and education programme - by extending the afternoon school timetable and organising canteen, transport and after-school childcare services;
- Law No 341 of 19 November 1990 entitled "Reform of university systems" provides for a specific degree divided into two branches which will bring together the cultural and vocational training of nursery and primary teachers. It also provides for the creation of a

specialisation diploma – to follow a university degree – for upper secondary school teachers;

- the Ministerial Decree of 28 June 1991 makes compulsory the introduction of foreign languages (French, English, Spanish or German) previously established under Law No 148, which began to be implemented during the 1992/93 school year;
- Law No 104 of 5 February 1992 reinforces Law No 517 of 1977 on the integration of handicapped people and introduces the following innovations:
    - it associates a working group for the primary or secondary education district (to be comprised of teachers, health and welfare service officials and parents of schoolchildren) with the provincial education authority's working group *(Provveditorato agli Studi);*
    - it reinforces inspections of school premises;
- Law No 537 of 24 December 1993 (not yet carried into effect) on the management of schools, will grant legal status and autonomy to all educational institutions in matters of organisation, teaching, research and development, whatever their level.

In Italy, reforms are introduced by law or presidential decree. Ministerial decrees carry laws into effect. Reforms are defined during parliamentary debates. The social partners, such as trade unions, have consultative powers. Nevertheless, reforms are generally preceded by a phase during which the Ministry of Education authorises pilot schemes and structural and/or methodological/didactic innovations to be introduced in schools which volunteer to participate. These pilot schemes are monitored by the inspectorate.

Certain reforms have been applied with immediate effect, such as the extension of the lower secondary education timetable which simultaneously involved all classes in the schools concerned. The reform modifying the curricula and educational structure in primary education has been implemented more gradually. Some aspects of this reform (such as the introduction of a foreign language) are still experiencing difficulties due to a shortage of specialised staff. This reform will nevertheless need to be monitored in order to study the implementation procedures and any problems they may raise as mentioned in the reports of school heads and inspectors.

The legal instruments to implement Italian legislation on education are often issued by the competent bodies only after extremely lengthy delays. This has been the case with the reforms of university training for nursery and primary school teachers and autonomy for educational institutions, all of which have yet to be either drawn up or put into effect.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The reform of teaching and educational goals has mainly involved the introduction of new curricula into primary education.

1.1. THE CURRICULA OF 1955

"Curricula are prescriptive in character. They stipulate the level of preparation to be attained by pupils so as to guarantee to all citizens the intellectual and psychological development they require for their effective and conscious participation in the life of society and the state. Under the terms of this law, such education is based on, and governed by, the Christian doctrine of the Catholic Church."

1.2. THE CURRICULA OF 1985

In the general preamble to the 1985 text, the objectives of primary education were defined as follows:

"The aim of primary education is to instruct individuals and citizens in accordance with the principles guaranteed by the Italian Constitution. It is furthermore inspired by the universal declarations of human and children's rights and must strive towards co-operation and mutual understanding between peoples."

"By welcoming all experiences which pupils bring with them, primary school must help foster mutual understanding and respect, especially with regard to religious convictions."

It is the duty of schools to provide "basic cultural literacy" and to "initiate pupils in the rights and duties of participating in the life of society".

The objectives of primary education may be defined as follows:

- to instruct pupils, in cooperation with their family and community;
- to educate young people for life within a democratic society.

Moreover, by reaffirming the declaration in the Constitution that "all citizens shall be entitled to basic compulsory education free of charge for a period of eight years" (Article 34 of the Italian Constitution), the reform considers primary education to be the most important phase in the development of a child's personality. Primary school forms a crucial pedagogical, educational and organisational link between nursery school and lower secondary school.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

None of the reforms mentioned here deal with the general organisation or structure of the education system.

Law No 1254 of 24 December 1957 which structured primary education into two stages (2 years + 3 years), abolished the division into two levels (3 years + 2 years) as well as the examination which led from the first to the second level. The new curricula serve to reinforce the new structure, which moreover corresponds to children's physical and psychological development. During the first stage, pupils accumulate facts without being able to establish links between them, whereas during the second stage their thinking becomes more structured, systematic and organised.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The most important reform in this area was introduced by Law No 537 of 24 December 1993. This reform grants legal status and autonomy to all schools in matters of organisation, financing, teaching, research and development, whatever their level. Legislative decrees will be required to determine the duties to be attributed to school heads. This will include supervision, promotion, coordination and making optimum use of human and professional resources, as well as managing financial and material resources, and responsibilities in line with the results obtained. The district education council *(Consiglio di circolo* and *Consiglio di Istituto)* draws up and adopts the general guidelines, determines methods of self-financing and approves the annual accounts.

In order to implement this reform, the government, on the proposal of the Ministry of Education, will be required to issue legislative decrees setting out the deadlines for its application and procedures for exercising this autonomy.

3.2. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

The most significant reform in this sector concerns the organisation of primary schools (Law No 148 of 5 June 1990).

In order to achieve the educational objectives specified in the new curricula, teachers are divided into **organisational modules** that are comprised of three teachers for every two classes or four teachers for every three classes.

The range of activities is structured according to the subject areas taught. The board of teachers distributes subjects and organises timetables. The headteacher distributes subject areas among the teachers, taking into account their experience and professional skills and ensuring that there is educational continuity. The weekly number of course periods was raised from 25 a week under the previous system to 27, with the possibility of extending this to 30 with the teaching of a foreign language.

The district education councils are free to consider the timetable arrangements, in line with available resources and family requirements. A choice has to be made between one of the two following solutions:

- a timetable covering six days, including one single afternoon (or two, for teaching the foreign language) per week;
- a timetable covering five days, including two afternoons (or three, for teaching the foreign language) per week.

Other forms of organisation are also possible:

- long-term education projects, which may bring together pupils from several classes and are aimed at integrating course syllabi, the weekly timetable for which should not exceed 37 hours;
- "full-time" activities organised in modules for 40 hours per week (including meal breaks).

Another reform, which considerably influenced the organisation of education, was the extension of the school timetable in lower secondary education (Ministerial Decree of 22 July 1983). This reform takes into account the full-time integrated school experiments conducted previously (Law No 270 of 20 May 1982 and Law No 820 of 29 September 1971), extra-curricular activities and the possible attendance by pupils at optional courses (Law No 517 of 4 August 1977).

The term "full-time schools" was previously applied to those schools which held lessons in the morning and also the afternoon until 4.30 p.m., amounting to a total of 40 hours per week. Specialised teachers were responsible for integration activities and cultural, artistic, expressive, play and recreational initiatives.

As a result of this reform, free supplementary activities and optional courses are entrusted to the teacher who teaches the ordinary lessons.

The pupils' timetable must therefore range between 30 and 40 hours per week. Even though these hours must be decided as part of the class council's teaching and education programme, the organisational procedures for such activities stipulate that teachers must be with their groups of pupils for 20% of the entire timetable for each class.

In lower secondary education, the extra school time added in the afternoon as a result of extending the timetable has not yet achieved the desired effect. A lack of willingness has been observed, especially on the part of families, to hand over responsibility for children's extra-curricular activities to the school.

4. CURRICULUM

As with the previous model, the model which has inspired the new primary education curricula applies to the whole of the national territory but the board of teachers and class council are given a wide degree of latitude in its implementation. They are allowed to define the specific objectives, content, methodologies and assessment in the context of the teaching and education programme.

The educational aims are as follows:

- ◆ to develop each and every pupil's creativity, through an awareness of their abilities and personality so as to gradually teach them how to make a self-assessment of their own personal and social skills;
- ◆ to acquire all types of language skills and an elementary grasp of the conceptual frameworks, aptitudes and analytical skills that are essential to an understanding of the human, natural and artificial world;
- ◆ to optimise individual skills and basic abilities;
- ◆ to eliminate school learning difficulties, whether they are linked to disability or disadvantage.

Previous curricula were determined mainly by the structural division of primary education into two stages, the first being of the "instrumental" type, that is to say, it has to provide pupils with the basic skills they need to assimilate the subject matter taught during the second stage.

With regard to **disciplines** and their **content**, the 1955 curricula were modified to bring in new subjects. Generally speaking, disciplines are grouped into areas.

THE 1955 CURRICULA	THE 1985 CURRICULA
– Religion – Moral and civic education, physical education – History, geography, science – Arithmetic and geometry – Italian language – Drawing and writing – Singing – Manual and practical activities.	– Italian language – Foreign language – Mathematics – Science – History, geography, social sciences – Religion (optional) – Visual arts education – Music education and ear training – Motor skills

The most significant **methodological innovations** involve:

- ◆ a pre-disciplinary approach during the first stage and a discipline-based approach during the second stage;
- ◆ adapting teaching in line with the knowledge, attainments, skills and emotional, psychological and social experiences of individual pupils;
- ◆ the definition of a new education and learning model which goes beyond the concept of pedagogy as a cultural theory to replace it with an approach based on research and problem resolution;
- ◆ planning teaching activities as a means of assessing the school's educational and cultural strategy.

With regard to **pupil assessment**, the reform of curricula and of the organisation of the school system confirms the assessment objectives and procedures introduced for primary schools by Law No 517 of 4 August 1977, which:

- abolished the examination between the first and second stages;
- established a single sitting for the final examination;
- compiled a personal record to replace scores out of ten by an assessment of pupils in terms of their level of participation in the life of the school, their academic results and their degree of maturity. This evaluation is made every three or four months. The final appraisal (analysis and summary) is presented to the parents during their meetings with teachers.

This reform therefore confirms the need for initial, continuous and formative assessment to obtain information on pupils' range of knowledge and abilities, their willingness to learn and their maturity.

Educational planning is assessed on the basis of this systematic observation of pupils.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The two most significant reforms in this area have been Law No 341 of 19 November 1990 and the Ministerial Decree of 28 June 1991. Law No 341 of 19 November 1990 on university reforms established the university degree as the required qualification for entry to the State competitive examinations for nursery and primary school teaching posts. This degree course is to be divided into two branches, one for training primary school teachers and the other for nursery school teachers.

Furthermore, for secondary school teachers, the official text provides for the creation of a specialisation diploma following the university degree. This reform is important because it brings Italy into line with European requirements regarding qualifications for entering the teaching profession. Prior to the reform, nursery school teachers obtained their teaching diploma at the end of upper secondary education *(Istituto magistrale)* and primary school teachers at the end of their studies in a higher level institute.

Implementation of the new primary education curricula required a considerable effort to train working teachers via a multi-annual in-service training scheme. It is the first time in the history of Italian education that a reform has stipulated compulsory in-service training for teachers, in this case in all five groups of subjects covered by the new curricula.

The Ministerial Decree of 28 June 1991 introduces the totally new concept that foreign language teaching must be entrusted to a specialised primary school teacher. In order to ensure the widest possible dissemination, foreign language teaching is being provided on a provisional basis by specialised primary school teachers who have volunteered their services. Each teacher is generally in charge of six classes. For their training, these teachers are divided into two groups according to their level of preparation. Group A includes teachers who have good language skills and only need a course on teaching languages, whereas group B is comprised of teachers who also wish to receive language training.

Two new professional profiles have therefore emerged. The first is for a specialised teacher who teaches a foreign language to several classes, often in different schools, and the other a specialised teacher who teaches a foreign language to his or her own class.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

Law No 517 of 4 August 1977 abolished the former system of classes reserved for children who suffer from psychomotor disabilities and behavioural problems. Since then, such pupils have been integrated into mainstream classes with a maximum of 20 pupils, where teachers receive back-up from support teachers specialised in the various types of handicap. The ratio is one support teacher for every four pupils requiring assistance.

Framework Law No 104/92 concerning handicaps ratified and normalised the preceding regulations by specifying:

- the required diplomas;
- the profile for support teachers.

Such teachers must be holders of a specialisation diploma obtained following two years of training, created under Presidential Decree No 970 of 31 October 1975. (There is one diploma for each type of handicap.) The number of support teachers is calculated on the basis of one for every four handicapped pupils throughout all the schools in a single province. These teachers are distributed within educational districts in proportion to the number of handicapped pupils in each district.

The integration of handicapped pupils involves their participation in special teaching activities and in activities in small groups which gradually bring them together with non-handicapped pupils. The combined presence of the support teacher and the class teacher makes it possible to avoid removing the handicapped pupil from class during the entire course.

Furthermore, these regulations provide for the creation of ordinary primary and lower secondary classes in convalescent centres and hospitals in order to permit handicapped pupils, who are temporarily unable to follow lessons, to continue their education and training. These classes are set up by the education authority in collaboration with the local health services *(Unita Sanitarie Locali)* and public and private centres approved by the Ministries of Public Health and Labour. In substance, the provisions of the Framework Law take up those in Article 29 of Law No 118 of 30 March 1971.

These classes also cater for non-handicapped minors who are in hospital for a period of 30 days or more. For this purpose, convalescent centres and hospitals may call upon the services of teachers with specific training in educational psychology (Article 12 of Law No 104/92).

LUXEMBOURG

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

Before entering into a brief description of the major reforms carried out over the period from 1984 to 1994, it is necessary to draw attention to several aspects of Luxembourg's specific context.

1. SPECIFIC CONTEXT OF LUXEMBOURG

1.1. CONCEPT OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION IN LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg applies the principle of compulsory schooling established in its Constitution (Article 23):

> "The State shall ensure that all Luxembourgers receive primary education, which shall be compulsory and free of charge. Medical and social assistance shall be governed by law. The State shall set up the requisite secondary school establishments and higher education courses, and shall also set up vocational training courses to be provided free of charge."[1]

Compulsory schooling refers to the period extending from the age a child is required to enter school until the minimum age at which he is allowed to leave school. In June 1994, pre-school education is compulsory for all children as from the age of 4. At the age of 6, children start to attend primary education and are allowed to finish their studies at the age of 15 at the earliest. The period of compulsory schooling therefore spans 11 years of full-time study.

In contrast to some other countries, compulsory education in Luxembourg is not based on a single phase. During their years of compulsory schooling, children do not all follow the same curriculum. At the end of their sixth year of primary school, pupils start to follow different educational paths.

1.2. POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Over the period from 1984 to 1994, Luxembourg had two Ministers of Education: Mr Boden until 1989 and Mr Fischbach following the 1989 legislative elections. Both ministers belonged to the same political party – the Christian Social Party (PCS) – which provided a certain level of continuity over the decade under review.

1.3. EDUCATION IN LUXEMBOURG AND PROBLEM ISSUES

The differences in curricula between grant-maintained private education and public education are not of much relevance in Luxembourg. Similarly, in view of the country's size, decision-making powers for education in Luxembourg are very centralised.

What sets Luxembourg apart in terms of education is its resolute policy of trilingualism. Luxembourg, situated as it is at a cross-roads between several cultures, certainly benefits from one of the healthiest economic situations in Europe and is home to large numbers of foreigners. Having set up a demanding education system, Luxembourg is now implementing broad measures to reduce school failure rates.

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[1] *«L'État veille à ce que tout Luxembourgeois reçoive l'instruction primaire qui sera obligatoire et gratuite. L'assistance médicale et sociale sera réglée par la loi. Il crée des établissements d'instruction moyenne et le cours d'enseignement supérieur nécessaire. Il crée également des cours professionnels gratuits.»*

2. PRINCIPAL REFORMS SINCE 1983

The major reforms have involved various aspects of compulsory education. These can be grouped into the following categories:

- reform(s) in the duration of pre-school education;
- reform(s) in the organisation of schools;
- reform(s) in the educational approach and monitoring of pupils;
- reform(s) in administration.

Let us briefly summarise the main reforms which are described in greater detail in Part II.

2.1. REFORMS IN THE DURATION OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

The duration of compulsory pre-school education was extended by one year to children of 4 years of age (instead of 5 years of age as previously).

2.2. REFORMS IN THE ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

Several important reforms took place:

- the reform of secondary education;
- the reform of secondary technical education; and most importantly
- the reform of supplementary education.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The various reforms, particularly those in technical secondary education and supplementary education (see 2.2.) form part of the general objective of combating school failure and exclusion and encouraging more young people to enter certified vocational training.

The duration of compulsory schooling was extended by one year at pre-school level.

Since the 1993/94 school year, attendance at both years of nursery school *(Spillschoul)* has become mandatory. Therefore the compulsory school starting age is now 4 (the condition for admission being that the child's birthday must fall before 1 September of the current school year). Prior to the reform, only the second year of pre-school education was compulsory.

The two compulsory years of pre-school education are in addition to the nine years of compulsory schooling established by the law of 10 August 1912 on primary education. The reform has raised the period of compulsory schooling from 10 to 11 years.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

For many years, schools in Luxembourg were organised in a three-tiered structure. After following six years of a core curriculum in primary education, pupils sit an entrance examination to qualify for secondary education. Pupils who fail this examination or who do not sit it, can sit the examination for entry into technical secondary education. Pupils who do not sit the examination and those who fail the entrance examination for secondary technical education continue their schooling in supplementary education.

The various reforms introduced have all had the dual aim of placing secondary technical education on an equal footing with traditional secondary education, with the result that both now provide access to university and "advanced studies", to integrate supplementary education – under the title of "preparatory regime" *(régime préparatoire)* – in the secondary technical education structure.

The reform of the former supplementary education sector is of importance to Luxembourg's compulsory education system. First we shall present reforms in secondary education and secondary technical education pertaining to the period of compulsory schooling in Luxembourg.

2.1. REFORMS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Since 1983, secondary education has not undergone any fundamental changes. However the law of 22 June 1989 subdivided secondary schooling into three levels:

- lower secondary school: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years (classes 7, 6 and 5);
- a multidisciplinary stage in upper secondary school: 4th and 5th years (classes 4 and 3);
- a specialisation stage.

The regulations implementing the above-mentioned law also lay down new promotion criteria for the first to sixth years of secondary school (classes 7 to 2). These new criteria offer pupils the possibility of making up for one or two slightly unsatisfactory marks, on condition that they have obtained an overall average of 35/60 or better. These regulations aim to avoid penalising occasional weaknesses in pupils who otherwise obtain good results.

2.2. REFORMS IN TECHNICAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

The law of 21 May 1979 on the organisation of vocational training and secondary technical education, amended by the law of 30 May 1984, combined all existing legislation to create secondary technical education for the first time. Standardising all these structures gave secondary technical education the homogeneity it lacked. By standardising structures and ensuring equivalence between diplomas for the various training paths in secondary technical education, the transition from one type of training to another has been made easier, eliminating barriers between the various educational institutions. The law of 30 May 1984 removed the vocational emphasis from the first three years of secondary technical education by offering pupils broader-based general education whilst providing young people with guidance in line with their own particular difficulties and aptitudes.

In terms of the timetables and curricula in application during the period under review, the process of removing the vocational emphasis during the first three years was not altogether smooth although it has now been successfully completed.

Furthermore, the law of 30 May 1984 opened up access to training leading to the *Certificat de Capacité Manuelle* (CCM – certificate of manual competence) for pupils who are unable to achieve the objectives of the vocational scheme within the time limits laid down by law. Holders of such a certificate are then allowed to sit the theoretical part of the end-of-apprenticeship tests, provided they have successfully completed the continuing training courses. The CATP *(certificat d'aptitude technique professionnelle* – certificate of technical and vocational proficiency) is awarded to pupils who have passed the theoretical part of the end-of-apprenticeship examination.

The main aim of the law of 4 September 1990 on the reform of secondary technical education and continuing vocational training was to ensure that greater numbers of young people undergo certified vocational training, to guarantee better guidance and to enhance the status of vocational training.

The law of 4 September 1990:

- reformed the way school cycles were organised;
- created new training paths – the technical training scheme leading to the vocational training certificate *brevet de technicien*, taken at age 16, and the *Certificat d'Initiation Technique et Professionnelle* (CITP – certificate of initial technical and vocational training);
- laid down new criteria for promotion to the next class;
- created remedial classes;
- liberalised access to higher education.

2.3. REFORM OF SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION, NOW CALLED THE PREPARATORY REGIME

Previously, supplementary education formed an integral part of primary education, which covered the entire nine years of compulsory schooling.

Supplementary education, which lasted three years, was the only path which remained open to a pupil who failed the entrance examinations to secondary education. There were three different branches: a preparatory 7th year which prepared pupils for access to secondary technical education; the 7th, 8th and 9th years of supplementary education proper which theoretically held open the chance to return to secondary technical education; and finally terminal classes, an extension of special classes. This was a path which offered few opportunities.

Supplementary education will now be integrated into the secondary technical education structure in the form of a preparatory scheme. The intention is to replace conventional classes with modules or units that can be cumulated in order to enable each individual pupil to progress at his own pace. The ultimate aim is to provide access to a multidisciplinary 8th class and a vocational 9th class. Outside the classroom, pupils will benefit from social, psychological and educational support.

The objective of the reform is to offer pupils better career prospects.

Note: Entrance examination for secondary education and secondary technical education

Luxembourg is one of the few countries which holds an examination at the end of primary education to orient children's future school careers. As a result, children are rapidly subjected to a very restrictive selection principle that has been represented by the three educational streams (secondary, secondary technical and supplementary education).

The transition from primary school proper (first to sixth years of school) towards post-primary education will be reformed soon.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Without being able to term it a reform in the proper sense, there is an emerging trend towards integrating a wider range of people into the education process, in particular the parents of schoolchildren. One example is the *conseils d'éducation* (education councils) in secondary schools *(lycées)* and vocational secondary schools *(lycées techniques)* (Grand-Ducal regulation of 23 May 1991).

One of the reforms which deserves special mention is the establishment of a college of inspectors as a result of the law of 9 August 1993. The inspectorate and the educational committee *(Commission d'instruction)* together constitute the body responsible for supervising primary education and they report directly to the government. The college of inspectors is comprised of an Inspector-General and 16 primary school inspectors. Not only is the Inspector-General responsible for supervising the activities of all the inspectors but he is also in charge of relations with the Minister for Education. The role of the college as a whole is to supervise schools, co-ordinate all the activities of the inspectorate and deal with questions submitted by the Minister for Education regarding the organisation of education.

The reform of supplementary education, now the preparatory regime, will have administrative repercussions when it is put into application insofar as supplementary education was previously attached to primary education and responsibility for it was shared between the local authority and the Ministry of Education. In future, the preparatory regime will be attached to secondary technical education under the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Schools.

3.2. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

Through "school projects" *(projets d'établissement)*, set up since the reform of secondary technical education (law of 4 September 1990), schools *(lycées* and *lycées techniques)* now have more autonomy.

3.3. FINANCING

No major reform.

4. CURRICULUM

The major reforms are:

- the introduction and resulting application of the primary school curriculum as from 1989 and the adaptation of curricula to match reforms in secondary technical education and supplementary education;
- the introduction and resulting application of the primary school curriculum as from 1989.

It is necessary to mention the fundamental task that has been set for primary education. This is to allow every child to acquire the core skills he needs to integrate into civil society, namely reading, writing and arithmetic.

The 1989 curriculum expresses the following basic principle:

> "The true vocation of primary school is to provide all individuals with the basic education they need for any new learning or subsequent training as well as their adaptation to new situations. Although it is true to say that the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic are vital to a person's general education, just as much importance has to be paid to developing strategic thinking, problem-solving skills and communication techniques. Also forming part of basic education is *savoir-être*, that is to say the development of attitudes and behaviour that are in the interests of society, the natural and cultural environment, technology and individuals themselves".

This principle is part of the following mission:

- "to help every child to become an adult who is free and independent, responsible and socially aware";
- to adapt curricula to match reforms in secondary technical education and supplementary education.

The preparatory regime in secondary technical education, formerly supplementary education, is aimed in particular at catering for children who are experiencing difficulties in assimilating course content and keeping up with the standard rate of learning. The preparatory regime is based on a modular approach which allows more individualised learning.

The revision of curricula for the lower cycle of secondary technical education is part of the process of removing the vocational component of this cycle.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The law of 7 October 1993 created a Pedagogical and Technological Research and Innovation Department *(Service de Coordination de la Recherche et de l'Innovation pédagogiques et technologiques – SCRIPT)* with the task of co-ordinating research and innovation in the various educational fields and of performing an ongoing analysis and evaluation of Luxembourg's education system.

The current trend is to boost the development of in-service teacher training.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

The major reforms include measures to assist immigrant children and children with disabilities.

6.1. VARIOUS MEASURES TO ASSIST IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

In order to foster the integration of foreign children into Luxembourg's schools, teaching staff are expected to regularly include exercises in the Luxembourgish language even as early as pre-school level.

In order to ease the transition from pre-school education to primary education for immigrant children, especially those who have not yet acquired the requisite language skills:

- more information is given to parents;
- appropriate audiovisual resources are developed;
- children are steered towards preparatory classes *(classes d'attente);*
- support teaching is organised in schools where there are not enough pupils to justify the creation of a preparatory class.

In principle, there are no special branches at primary level. Primary school is the same for all pupils, although some adjustments have been made to cope with special educational needs, especially those of immigrant children. Briefly, these include:

- special classes, organised for children aged between 9 and 12 who have learning problems;
- reception classes, for immigrant children who arrive during the course of the school year;
- special education;
- support teaching for learning German;

- integration of the language of origin for immigrant children;
- supervised study;
- supervised homework.

6.2. MEASURES TO INTEGRATE CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Since the beginning of compulsory schooling, disabled children have not been systematically integrated into the mainstream system since there is a parallel system adapted to the specific needs of disabled children.

However, there is now a genuine desire on the part of the Ministry of Education to integrate disabled children into mainstream schools according to the ministerial order of 4 November 1991 on "common education for all children". This does not, however, mean that the parallel system of special education is about to disappear. In cases where it has become "impossible" to integrate disabled children into the mainstream system, this involves strengthening co-ordination and links between inspectors, the *commission médico-psycho-pédagogique nationale* (national medical, psychological and pedagogical committee), the *direction de l'éducation différenciée* (department for special educational needs), specialised staff and parents.

Compulsory schooling for disabled children was introduced by the law of 14 March 1973.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Two of the aims of the School Psychology and Guidance Centre *(Centre de psychologie et d'orientation scolaires – CPOS)*, established in accordance with the law of 1 April 1987 are:

- to provide psychological and educational guidance for pupils in post-primary education, as well as helping to advise pupils in the 6th year of primary school;
- to consult parents and pupils, in general, as well as teachers and those responsible for young people's education in matters concerning the psychological, emotional and social aspects of the learning process.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

Evaluation of the system, which was for many years somewhat neglected, should now be systematised as a result of the law of 7 October 1993 which created the Pedagogical and Technological Research and Innovation Department (SCRIPT), one of whose missions is to conduct an ongoing evaluation of the Luxembourg education system.

THE NETHERLANDS

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

1. INTRODUCTION

The two main reforms introduced in compulsory education between 1984 and 1994 are the **new Primary Education Act (WBO)** of 1985, which resulted in the integration of nursery schools (ages 4 to 6) and schools for 6 to 12-year-olds to form the **new-style primary schools** *(basisonderwijs)*, and the **amendment of the Secondary Education Act (WVO)** which led to the introduction of **basic secondary education** *(basisvorming)* at the start of the 1993/94 school year. The aim of the latter is to reform the curriculum and raise standards in the first stage of secondary education within the existing types of school. Another important piece of legislation introduced during this period is the **Special Education Interim Act (ISOVSO)** which entered into force on 1 August 1985 (see 7.6.).

The future of education in the Netherlands was debated at length in the 1960s and 1970s. New ideas about primary and secondary education caught on. Political consensus about the reform of secondary education proved impossible, but agreement was reached on the introduction of the **new-style primary school**.

The desire for reforms at primary level came mainly from the education world. The practice of keeping children back a year, the traditional split between nursery and primary education, the year group system (fixed syllabuses for each age group) and the lack of scope for individual supervision were being seen as a problem by more and more teachers. The existing system was too rigid. The schools also wanted to be able to anticipate new developments in society more effectively.

At secondary level, a broad range of schools continued to exist side by side until long after the Second World War. When the Secondary Education Act (popularly known as the "Mammoth Act") came into force in 1968, it brought many of these schools together under one statutory framework. Although this made for greater cohesion, there was still a great deal of variety, and the differences in traditions, implementing regulations and curricula meant that the various types of secondary school constituted distinctly separate learning pathways.

In the 1970s the concept of a **middle school** was mooted. The idea was that there would be one type of school providing general and vocationally-oriented education for all pupils upon leaving primary school, regardless of ability, background, sex or academic achievement. The controversy surrounding middle schools made any further substantive discussion of the development of secondary education impossible. Individuals were either for or against middle schools, and both standpoints were identified with more or less irreconcilable social and political views. A handful of experimental schools were nonetheless set up; they were to find themselves out on a limb by the end of the decade.

The period that followed was marked by efforts to maintain the status quo and cautious attempts to set non-controversial developments in motion. Educational reform was in an impasse. A breakthrough came in 1986 with the publication of a report on basic secondary education by the **Advisory Council on Government Policy (WRR)**. It was on this report that the bill governing basic secondary education was based. The bill was approved in 1992 and amends the Secondary Education Act of 1968. As of the 1993/94 school year, all forms of secondary education now begin with a period of **basic secondary education**, i.e. the different types of school still exist, but they now teach the same core curriculum in the first three years. The aim is to give 12- to 15-year-olds a broad-based general education without a strict dividing line between general and technical subjects, thereby putting an end to thirty years of debate on the first stage of secondary education.

2. PRIMARY EDUCATION

One of the fundamental features of the Primary Education Act is that the education of young children is regarded as a continuous process, which should not be interrupted at the age of 6 by the transition from nursery to junior school. The two types of school therefore had to be integrated.

Until 1985, nursery schools (4- to 6-year-olds) were governed by the Nursery Education Act of 1956, while junior schools (6- to 12-year-olds) were governed by the Primary Education Act 1920. Since then, there has been only one type of school for pupils from 4 to 12 (called *basisonderwijs)*, governed by the Primary Education Act 1985.

Primary education aims to promote the development of children's emotions, intellect and creativity and the acquisition of essential knowledge together with social, cultural and physical skills in an uninterrupted process of development. At the same time, teaching must reflect the fact that pupils are growing up in a multicultural society.

The new Primary Education Act lowered the age at which children have to start school to 5 years. Until then, 5-year-olds did not have to go to school. Nonetheless, some 96% of 4-year-olds and over 98% of 5-year-olds attended school on a voluntary basis. Although children do not have to start school until the first school day of the month following their fifth birthday, almost all children in fact attend school from the age of 4.

The process leading to the introduction of the new-style primary schools can be split into four main parts:

- initiation (in the 1960s);
- preparation (1970s);
- transformation (1980s);
- implementation (from 1985 onwards).

The new system has been evaluated twice to date, resulting in a policy document entitled "So much ground covered and still so far to go" in 1990 and the publication of the final report, "Focus on quality", of the Primary Education Evaluation Committee in early 1994.

3. JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Secondary Education Act which came into force in 1968 governs the following types of education:

- pre-university education (VWO);
- senior secondary general education (HAVO);
- junior secondary general education (MAVO);
- pre-vocational education (VBO), known before 1 August 1992 as junior secondary vocational education (LBO);
- senior secondary vocational education (MBO);
- adult secondary general education (VAVO).

Junior secondary education (i.e. the first stage of secondary education) comprises the four-year VBO and MAVO courses and the first three years of HAVO (five years in all) and VWO (six years in all). There are three types of pre-university school: the *atheneum* (with no classical languages); the *gymnasium* (in which classical languages are obligatory) and the *lyceum* (in which classical languages are optional).

Since the start of the 1993/94 school year, all secondary schools begin with a period of **basic secondary education** *(basisvorming)*. In a report dating from 1986, the Advisory Council on Government Policy defined basic secondary education as "a common, all-round education – intellectual, cultural and social – which will serve as a basis for the further development of the individual's personality, their useful participation in society and a sensible choice of career or further schooling". In 1992, the Secondary Education Act 1968 was amended to allow the introduction of basic secondary education with a view to:

- raising the general level of education for young people;
- postponing the point at which pupils have to choose a particular course of study or career and, to this end:
- modernising and partly harmonising the first few years of secondary education to provide a common core curriculum for all pupils and introducing attainment targets for both primary education and the first stage of secondary education.

Vocational education for the 12 to 15 age group has seen two changes. As well as the introduction of basic secondary education, the name of this type of education has been changed from junior secondary vocational education (LBO) to pre-vocational education (VBO). The change of name is intended to underline the fact that VBO is not terminal, but is designed to lead on to apprenticeship training (working and learning combined) or senior secondary vocational education (MBO).

Most secondary schools nowadays form part of a **combined school**, in which several types of school (MAVO, HAVO, VWO, VBO and/or MBO) work together. There are also schools providing just one type of education, e.g. a VBO school. The creation of combined schools is encouraged by the government. This move towards **scale expansion** is linked to the introduction of basic secondary education *(basisvorming)*. Under the new system, all pupils follow the same core curriculum of 15 subjects for the first three years. This means that they can delay making a final decision about the type of school they should go to. Although it is possible to move from one school to another, switching courses is much easier at a broad-based combined school. Many combined schools have combined classes (VBO/MAVO, MAVO/HAVO, HAVO/VWO) in the first three years.

There has not yet been an evaluation of basic secondary education for obvious reasons, given that it was only introduced in the school year 1993/94.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Primary Education Act (WBO) of 1985 provides a statutory framework for a more modern approach to **primary education** in the Netherlands. Primary schools cater for children from 4 to about 12 years of age and provide in principle eight consecutive years of schooling. Primary education lays the foundation for secondary education.

As of the 1993/94 school year, all forms of secondary education now begin with a period of **basic secondary education** *(basisvorming)* lasting three years. The different types of school still exist, but they now teach the same core curriculum in the first three years. The aim is to give 12- to 15-year-olds a broad-based general education without a strict dividing line between general and technical subjects.

1.2. FEATURES AND AIMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education aims to promote the development of children's emotions, intellect and creativity and the acquisition of essential knowledge together with social, cultural and physical skills in an uninterrupted process of development. At the same time, teaching must reflect the fact that pupils are growing up in a multicultural society.

1.2.1 BEFORE 1985

- Nursery education was governed by the Nursery Education Act 1956.
- Nursery education was not compulsory.
- Children had to leave nursery school on reaching the age of 7.
- Nursery schools did not provide education in the normal sense of the word.
- Each nursery school had a play-and-work plan.
- Primary education was governed by the Primary Education Act 1920.
- Primary education was compulsory as of 1 August of the school year in which a child reached the age of 6 years and 8 months. Children could also be admitted on 1 August if their sixth birthday fell before 1 October of that calendar year.
- Primary education lasted for six years.
- Primary education was geared to the continuous development of the children, taking into account the differences between them at successive stages in their development.
- Children who had not made sufficient progress during the year had to repeat the year.

1.2.2. AFTER 1985

- Primary education is governed by the Primary Education Act 1985.
- Primary education is for children from 4 to about 12 years of age.
- Children have to attend school from the first school day of the month following their fifth birthday.
- Teaching is based on the school work plan.
- The school work plan sheds light on the teaching and development objectives of the school, the choice of subject matter, the teaching methods used, the organisation of the school and how pupils' progress is assessed and reported.
- It assumes that pupils will, in principle, proceed through the school in eight consecutive years.
- The school work plan has to make provision for pupils with learning and developmental difficulties.
- Each year the school draws up a programme of activities on the basis of its school work plan, specifying what pupils will be doing during a particular period, the duties of the teaching staff and also school hours, holidays and days off.
- The practice of keeping children back a year has in theory been abolished. Some children do, however, take longer than eight years to complete their primary schooling.

1.3. FEATURES AND AIMS OF JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

Under the terms of the Secondary Education Act, **public-authority** schools must foster the development of pupils with due respect for the different ideological and social values held in Dutch society. **Private** schools, on the other hand, are free to shape the content of teaching according to their own views. This freedom is limited by a number of qualitative norms laid down by the Ministry of Education in education legislation.

1.3.1. BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF BASIC SECONDARY EDUCATION *(BASISVORMING)*

- Secondary education was governed by the Secondary Education Act 1968.
- The purpose of the Act was to create an integrated network of educational facilities at secondary level and to facilitate the transfer of pupils between the different types of school.
- A transitional year was introduced in the first year to improve internal cohesion by facilitating transfer to other types of school in the second year. **This meant that the final choice of school could be delayed by one year.**
- It was possible to set up combined schools.
- The competent authority *(bevoegd gezag)* appointed an admissions board that was responsible for deciding who would be admitted to the school.
- Teaching was to promote the general development of the pupils through the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and to contribute to their moral education on the basis of traditional Dutch values, especially those of Christianity and humanism (in public-authority schools).

1.3.2. AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF BASIC SECONDARY EDUCATION *(BASISVORMING)*

- Basic secondary education is governed by an amendment to the Secondary Education Act 1968.
- There was a need to raise the general level of youth education.
- The point at which pupils had to choose a particular form of education or career would be delayed to the end of the third year.
- In view of the above, it was deemed desirable to modernise and partially harmonise the curriculum in the first three years of secondary school to create a **core curriculum** for all pupils and, at the same time, to introduce **attainment targets** for primary education and basic secondary education.
- The pre-vocational nature of junior secondary vocational education (LBO) would be reinforced (LBO would become VBO, i.e. pre-vocational education).
- Every secondary school draws up a **school work plan** setting out how the objectives of basic secondary education are to be implemented in general and for each subject. The competent authority formulates the school work plan in cooperation with the headteacher and deputy and submits it to the Education Inspectorate for approval.
- Every secondary school is obliged to hold tests supplied by central government at the end of the period of basic secondary education.
- The government intends to promote the creation of larger, broader-based schools (combined schools) parallel with the introduction of basic secondary education.
- Pupils may be grouped by ability or type of education or placed in mixed-ability groups.
- Public-authority schools must foster the development of pupils with due respect for the different ideological and social values held in Dutch society.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The diversity of the Dutch education system means that there is a vast number of competent authorities. The combination of centralised education policy and the decentralised management and administration of schools is typical of the Netherlands.

Every school is eligible for government funding, provided it complies with the statutory quality requirements and conditions of funding, which apply to all schools.

The trend is towards greater autonomy for schools. This will necessitate reducing the number of rules and regulations laid down at central level with regard to funding and conditions of employment in schools.

2.2. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Central government controls education by means of legislation and regulations, in keeping with the Constitution. This applies to both public-authority and private schools. Direct control can be exercised by means of qualitative or quantitative requirements relating to the education process or educational attainment (the latter in secondary schools only). Funding offers a more indirect means of control.

The competent authority of a school is responsible for implementing education legislation and regulations. There are approximately 6 300 competent authorities in all. Each municipal authority is the competent authority for the publicly run schools in its area. The competent authority of a private school is the board of the association or foundation which established the school.

Central government intends to give greater autonomy to schools by reducing the number of regulations and concentrating on its core tasks, i.e. adequate funding, the formulation of general quality requirements and inspecting schools in a constructive way. Agreement has accordingly been reached on the introduction of **administrative reforms** in primary and secondary education over the next few years (based on the outcome of the so-called Scheveningen Talks) and on making a start on the simplification of the Londo funding system, introducing a staff establishment budget system and looking into the possibilities of block grant funding (see 2.3.).

In both primary and secondary education there is a tendency towards expansion of scale. The Establishment and Closure of Schools (Revised Norms) Act, which entered into force on 1 January 1994, provides for the closure or merger of approximately 1 400 of the 8 300 primary schools in the Netherlands by 1996. The norms for the establishment and closure of schools are based on the density of the school-age population in a particular municipality, i.e. the number of children aged 4 to 12 per square kilometre.

2.3. FUNDING

A new system for the funding of buildings, teaching materials and maintenance in **primary and special schools**, known as the **Londo system**, was introduced at the same time as the new Primary Education Act. Under this system, schools receive a budget calculated with the help of various indicators based on norms for accommodation, furniture, equipment and maintenance, which is awarded to the competent authority. The number of indicators on which a school's grant is based is to be reduced considerably with a view to **simplifying the Londo system**, thereby making it more manageable and easier to implement.

Two **new forms of funding** have entered the scene around the end of the 1980s: the **staff establishment budget system** and **block grant funding**. This affects both primary and secondary schools.

The staff establishment budget system works as follows. Schools are awarded a budget comprising a certain number of units of account, the basic norm, calculated on the basis of the standard rules on staff numbers. Within this budget, they are free to decide the actual composition of their staff, both as regards the nature of the various posts and the hours worked. The total staff establishment is calculated on the basis of the number of pupils at the school in the previous year and the composition of the school. The reimbursement of non-staff costs has also been based since 1993 primarily on pupil numbers in the previous year.

The above system is to be replaced in due course by block grant funding (in 1998 for primary schools and in 1996 for secondary schools). Schools will receive a norm-based budget for staff and non-staff costs. School boards will be free to spend this money as they wish, within certain general parameters. The new system will differ from the old one in that the price as well as the number of staff will be fixed. The average personnel costs (i.e. average price) for a full-time equivalent in each staff category (management, teaching staff and non-teaching staff) will be fixed initially per school and, after two years, for the whole country. The total staff budget to which the school is entitled will then be calculated on the basis of the number of pupils in the previous year. The type of school and age distribution of the pupils will also be taken into account, so that the figure produced is as close as possible to the actual personnel costs. Block grant funding will give schools greater and greater responsibility for policy, management and innovation.

3. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The main changes in the structure of the Dutch education system as a result of the introduction of the new Primary Education Act in 1985 and basic secondary education in 1993 are:

- the integration of nursery and primary schools to form new-style primary schools;
- the lowering of the start of compulsory schooling to the age of 5;
- the introduction of a common core curriculum in the first three years of all secondary schools.

4. REFORMS IN THE ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The competent authority administers and manages a school. Administration entails looking after the material aspects of the organisation of a school and, in particular, making decisions about expenditure on running costs and personnel. Management involves determining policy on the curriculum, personnel matters (appointment and dismissal of staff) and the admission of pupils. The competent authority is responsible for what goes on in the school, in so far as this is governed by statutory regulations. Some of its powers can be delegated to the headteacher and deputies, but ultimate responsibility lies with the competent authority. Each municipal authority is the competent authority (governing body) for the publicly run schools in its area. The competent authority of a private school is the board of the association or foundation which established the school. The powers of the governing bodies of public-authority and private schools differ only slightly. The diversity of the Dutch education system means that there is a vast number of competent authorities (approx. 6 300). The combination of centralised education policy (legislation and regulations) and the decentralised management and administration of schools is typical of the Netherlands.

4.2. RESPONSIBILITY

The period from 1984 to 1994 saw a reversal in thinking about the tasks of government and the emergence of the idea of greater autonomy for schools, etc. (see 2.). In September 1993, following discussions between central government (the Ministry of Education) and representatives of the consultative bodies for primary and secondary education (the so-called Scheveningen Talks), agreement was reached on the introduction of administrative reforms in primary and secondary schools over the next few years. There will be far fewer rules on funding, conditions of employment and legal status, the general aim being to give schools more autonomy vis-à-vis central government. The workload for the Ministry in connection with administrative and management tasks will also be reduced in due course. The number of obligations imposed on schools with regard to drafting policy plans and accounting to central government for their actions will likewise be reduced.

4.3. PARTICIPATION

Since the introduction of the **Education Participation Act (WMO)** in 1982, which was amended in 1992, it has been compulsory for every primary, secondary and special school to have a participation council *(medezeggenschapsraad).* The Act stipulates, for instance, that:

- the competent authority must give the participation council the opportunity to discuss the general situation in the school at least twice a year;
- the council is empowered to discuss all matters concerning the school;
- the council shall, to the best of its ability, foster openness, access to information and consultation within the school;
- the council shall guard against discrimination of all kinds within the school and promote equal treatment in equal cases; in particular, it should promote the equal treatment of men and women and the employment of disabled persons and ethnic minorities.

In primary and special schools, the participation council comprises an equal number of elected representatives of the staff and parents, with a total membership of between 6 and 18 persons, depending on the size of the school. In primary schools, parents can also join the parents' council, which advises the parent representatives in the participation council and coordinates activities by the parents.

Every secondary school has a participation council, which possesses a number of general powers and has the right to advise on or approve decisions and put forward proposals (Education Participation Act 1992). The council comprises equal numbers of elected representatives of the staff and parents/pupils, with a total membership of between 6 and 18 persons, depending on the size of the school. The staff can set up a joint staff council or separate councils for teaching and support staff. The staff council or councils are empowered to make recommendations to the participation council and/or the head teacher.

The Education Participation Act 1992 is an amended version of the 1982 Act. The then State Secretary for Education, Jacques Wallage, decided to amend the original Act on the basis of the recommendations of a review committee in 1987. The changes made included giving wider powers to the governing bodies of schools and strengthening the position of staff in the participation process.

5. CURRICULUM

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the Primary Education Act in 1985 had consequences for the primary curriculum. A number of new subjects, such as "religious and ideological movements" and "healthy living", were introduced, and the curriculum was brought more into line with recent social developments, it being one of the aims of the Act to gear teaching to the all-round development of pupils.

Basic secondary education was introduced as a way of reforming and improving the junior secondary curriculum within the existing types of school. The principal elements of basic secondary education are:

- acquisition of the knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils will need in their school career and adult life;
- the use of new, practice-oriented subject matter and course books;
- application of the knowledge and skills learnt.

5.2. CHANGES IN THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

5.2.1. PRIMARY CURRICULUM BEFORE 1985

Primary education was defined by the old Primary Education Act as instruction in:

- reading
- writing
- arithmetic
- Dutch
- Dutch history
- geography
- road safety
- science
- singing
- drawing
- physical exercise.

Instruction could also be given in the following:

- textile crafts
- French
- German
- English
- mathematics
- office practice
- general history
- creative handicraft
- horticulture
- domestic crafts

- home economics
- Frisian
- Esperanto.

5.2.2. PRIMARY *(BASISONDERWIJS)* CURRICULUM AFTER 1985

The curriculum now comprises the following subjects, which should be taught, if possible, in an integrated manner:

- sensory coordination and physical exercise
- Dutch
- arithmetic and mathematics
- English
- a number of factual subjects including: geography, history, science (biology), social structures (civics) and religious and ideological movements
- expressive activities including: use of language, drawing, music, handicrafts, and play and movement
- self-reliance, i.e. social and life skills, including road safety
- healthy living.

Although these subjects are compulsory, schools are free to decide how many hours they spend on each. Schools in the province of Friesland also teach Frisian and may give other lessons in Frisian as well. Children from a non-Dutch background may also be taught in their mother tongue.

English has been compulsory since 1986 and is taught in the top two years.

The Primary Education Act 1985 does not prescribe the content of the curriculum or the teaching methods to be used. Instead, attainment targets have been formulated, which indicate in general terms the minimum level that pupils must have achieved at the end of their primary schooling. Attainment targets were introduced in 1993. Schools have up to five years in which to meet the targets, after which their implementation and use will be evaluated.

The National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) develops master teaching plans and models, or alternative models, for school work plans and sections thereof. Schools are free to make use of these products.

5.3. CHANGES IN THE JUNIOR SECONDARY CURRICULUM

5.3.1. CURRICULUM PRIOR TO THE INTRODUCTION OF BASIC SECONDARY EDUCATION

- The competent authority drew up the curriculum and timetable in cooperation with the headteacher and deputies and forwarded them to the Education Inspectorate for approval.
- The curriculum set out the subjects to be taught, the number of periods per week to be spent on each subject in each year group and the length of the lessons.
- Tables were drawn up at central level showing the minimum number of hours that had to be spent by law on each subject throughout secondary school. The minimum number of lessons to be taught in the first year was prescribed separately. The remaining time could be distributed over the other years as the school saw fit. There was also an upper limit on the number of lessons that could be taught.

- In schools for junior secondary vocational education (LBO or VBO as of 1.8.1992) instruction was given in general subjects and vocationally-oriented subjects.
- Work experience was a major component of the LBO/VBO course, introducing pupils to the world of work.

5.3.2. CURRICULUM AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF BASIC SECONDARY EDUCATION *(BASISVORMING)*

- **Attainment targets** have been formulated for all subjects in the core curriculum, indicating the knowledge, understanding and skills which pupils are expected to acquire by the end of the first three years of secondary school. The school must create the conditions necessary to enable pupils to achieve these targets.
- Every secondary school draws up a school work plan setting out how the objectives of basic secondary education are to be implemented in general and for each subject.
- The competent authority formulates the school work plan in cooperation with the school head and deputy, and submits it to the Education Inspectorate for approval.
- Pupils in the first three years of all secondary schools will be taught a compulsory core curriculum of 15 subjects (3 000 hours). The remaining 20% of teaching time (840 hours) can be used by schools for lessons or other educational activities. This 'free time' need not be used in the same way for every pupil and its extent may vary for each year group.
- The following are the recommended numbers of hours to be spent on each subject, spread over three years. The number of hours shown is not compulsory, except in the case of the arts (visual arts education, music, dance and drama) and physical education:

Dutch	400
English	280
Second modern language	240
Mathematics	400
Biology	120
Physics and chemistry	200
IT studies	20
History and politics	200
Geography	140
Economics	80
Technology	180
Self-sufficiency (social and life skills)	100
Visual arts education, music, dance, drama (at least two of these)	280
Physical education	360

- There are three new subjects: **IT studies**, **technology** and **self-sufficiency**.
- There is a prescribed minimum number of hours to be spent on vocational subjects in VBO.
- A third modern language is compulsory in the first three years of senior general secondary education (HAVO) and pre-university education (VWO), while the *gymnasium* curriculum must also include Latin or Greek.

5.4. COURSE BOOKS

Primary schools are free to choose their own course books and teaching materials. This is not prescribed by the government.

There are no detailed rules regarding the choice of subject matter, text books or teaching materials for **basic secondary education**. The subject matter and teaching methods to be used must be described in the school work plan. The content of the curriculum is influenced by the attainment targets laid down for primary and secondary schools and, at secondary level, by the regulations concerning school-leaving examinations.

6. TEACHING STAFF

6.1. PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING

Primary school teacher training was reorganised to coincide with the introduction of the new Primary Education Act. The new courses began in 1984, training students to teach all age groups from 4 to 12. Until then, separate courses had existed for nursery teachers (ages 4 to 6) and primary teachers (ages 6 to 12).

The introduction of the new Primary School Teacher Training Colleges Act in 1984 was preceded by a large-scale merger operation; the 90 existing colleges of education and 45 nursery teacher training colleges amalgamated to form 66 colleges, providing training for the new-style primary schools.

The new training courses aim to produce versatile teachers, capable of teaching across the entire range of subjects and age groups in primary schools. The course content has therefore been expanded considerably.

6.2. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

In-service training is essential for the quality of teaching. Syllabuses, text books and pupils change. In-service training is governed by law and is one of the criteria for promotion. The Minister must ensure that there are sufficient in-service training courses available throughout the country.

One recent development is the phased transfer of in-service training funds from the colleges and universities that provide teacher training to primary and secondary schools. This operation began in mid-1993 and will be completed by August 1997. Teacher training colleges and departments will adopt a more market-oriented approach; the form and type of in-service training offered will be determined by the demand from schools. Schools will also be able to turn elsewhere for their training needs. The Minister will continue to have a specific responsibility for in-service training under this new system. Where certain topics are considered to be of special importance, extra money may be made available for them and the Minister may himself arrange for courses to be offered in these subjects. This will be done for a limited period and for a limited number of participants only.

The teacher training institutes may set up in-service training courses in conjunction with the school counselling services or one of the national educational advisory centres (see 8.). Experts from outside the education system may also be brought in. The length of the courses is not fixed, except in the case of courses commissioned by the Minister. The training institutes decide in consultation with the schools how long a course will be.

Various courses of both a general and specific nature have been developed for **primary school** teachers since the introduction of the new Primary Education Act. Many of these serve to implement the Minister's national educational innovation policy. One example of such a course is the course on the introduction of new-style primary education, which began in the 1983/84 school year.

The introduction of **basic secondary education** at junior secondary level as of 1 August 1993 has resulted in a number of courses being developed to retrain teachers in the new subjects of technology and self-sufficiency. The courses are run by the teacher training institutes. Teachers wishing to qualify in one of these subjects are exempted from some of their teaching duties. The subject of IT studies is taught in combination with one of the following subjects: Dutch, economics, mathematics, physics and chemistry, or technology. A separate qualification is not required and there is no statutory obligation to take part in in-service training.

6.3. TEACHERS

The education sector is one of the biggest employers in the Netherlands. Some 250 000 people – almost 6% of the working population – work in education. Of these, approximately 210 000 are teachers; the rest are support staff.

The status of teachers and the attractiveness of the teaching profession declined during the 1980s, a trend which was not confined to the Netherlands. The teachers has become just another member of the public, not least because of the phenomenal growth of education itself in the last few decades, which has caused the elite status of the teacher – which used to be more or less automatic – to gradually disappear. In addition, teachers' pay and conditions deteriorated in comparison to those in other professions. Their workload increased, working conditions offered little flexibility and the prospects of promotion or transfer were slim. In short, the teaching profession had an altogether poor image.

One of the main elements of government policy since 1990 has been to foster a positive attitude towards the teaching profession, both in terms of its image and the social standing of teachers. This has resulted in two agreements being signed with representatives of the education world, designed to improve the position of teachers. Starting salaries have, for instance, been raised and serving teachers are now able to take sabbaticals. In 1993 a committee drew up a report on the long-term role, position and status of teachers and the related issues of teacher training and professional qualifications. In its response to this report, the government endorsed the main thrust of the committee's recommendations, i.e. that schools should become more like other organisations with their own educational and personnel policies. In addition, the government intends to focus more attention on the substantive aspects of teaching and the professionalism of teachers. Various action points have been formulated.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

7.1. EDUCATIONAL PRIORITY

Ever since 1974, efforts have been made to eliminate educational disadvantages, the explanation for which was sought initially in the socio-economic background of children and later also in their ethnic origin. This led over the years to the development of an **educational priority policy** for primary, secondary and special schools and plans to give this policy a statutory basis. The term "educational priority policy" has been used since 1982 when social priority policy and policy on ethnic minorities were integrated.

The rules governing staff numbers stipulate that the number of teachers at a school depends not only on the number of pupils but also on their socio-economic and ethnic background (the **primary school weighting regulations** and the **ethnic minorities resources scheme**). This amounts to a form of positive discrimination towards schools with large numbers of pupils from the lower social classes.

Educational priority policy seeks, through a combination of measures and activities, to enable schools which have a high percentage of disadvantaged or potentially disadvantaged pupils to take steps to help these children so that they will benefit more from their schooling and are just as likely to achieve the educational targets set as their classmates. This applies to both individual schools and groups of schools working together on a regional basis.

The **National Educational Priority Policy Framework 1993-97** sets out the government's policy on educational priority areas. Schools in these areas may be allocated extra resources provided they meet one of the conditions given in the National Policy Framework and cooperate with other schools and institutions. Support is provided by the national educational advisory centres. The final version of the National Policy Framework was adopted pursuant to the **Educational Priority Areas Act**, which came into force on 1 August 1993.

Other measures taken by the Ministry of Education include the development of special teaching materials and a pupil monitoring system. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport promotes the development of pre-school and out-of-school programmes. This integrated approach fits into the broader framework of **social regeneration**, a policy which aims to eliminate and prevent social disadvantages through the joint efforts of central and local government, community-based organisations and members of the public. This new strategy, which also embraces other policy areas, was introduced in 1989.

A report by the Kemenade Committee, entitled "Cedars in the garden", which was published in October 1992, recommended a three-track policy to improve the educational attainment of native Dutch and ethnic minority children alike. The three tracks are: eliminating disadvantages, instruction in **Dutch as a second language (NT2)** and **minority language teaching (OET)**. The government's response to the report, which dates from October 1993, is still being considered by Parliament.

7.2. INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Primary and secondary schools have, since 1986, been required by law to take account of the fact that children are growing up in a multicultural society. Schools had first been asked to develop activities in the field of intercultural education seven years earlier, in 1979. Intercultural education is for all pupils, not just for those from ethic minorities.

Government policy in the period up to 1993 went little further than setting goals and defining tasks. The Ministry of Education supports the dissemination of information on intercultural education, the development of teaching materials, in-service training for teachers and professional development for school advisers. The rest is up to the teachers and education support services.

A recent study of primary schools shows that schools do not give serious thought to the development and introduction of intercultural education unless they have to deal with substantial numbers of ethnic minority pupils. At the same time, the presence of minority pupils at a school does not in itself guarantee the provision of intercultural education. Schools without any minority pupils have different goals to those which do have minority pupils. The former concentrate solely on teaching pupils about other cultures, whereas for the latter intercultural education is more a question of the climate in the school and how pupils and teachers relate to each other than part of the curriculum with clearly-defined objectives.

7.3. DUTCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The importance of having a good command of Dutch for a child's school career and its participation in Dutch society is obvious. Nonetheless, it was many years before explicit attention was paid to the teaching of Dutch as a second language to children from ethnic minorities. In 1989, a memorandum was published which made funds available specifically for this purpose. A project group was set up to advise the government on policy. Extra money is currently being channelled into the teaching of Dutch as a second language in municipalities with large numbers of recent immigrants.

7.4. MINORITY LANGUAGE AND CULTURE TEACHING

The objectives of minority language and culture teaching (OETC) have been modified several times since it was introduced in the 1970s. Its chief function originally was to make it easier for people from ethnic minorities to return to their home country. This changed when it was realised that many immigrants were in fact staying here for much longer than had at first been envisaged. Minorities policy has been geared since 1983 to promoting equal opportunities in the socio-economic sphere and cultural equality. General facilities should be accessible to members of ethnic minority groups, who should derive as much benefit from them as the majority population. Moreover, under the Constitution, members of ethnic minority groups have the same rights as the majority population to facilities for the expression of their own religion or beliefs.

The "official" purpose of OETC, i.e. as laid down in government documents, is to teach pupils their mother tongue, familiarise them with their own culture, develop a positive self-image and healthy self-awareness, narrow the gap between school and home, and contribute to intercultural education. Teaching must reflect the fact that the children are growing up in Dutch society. Over the years there has been a shift in policy: the language component has become more prominent, while the cultural component has been integrated within intercultural education. Many policy documents and regulations therefore now refer to OET (minority language teaching) rather than OETC. It is clear from the number of pupils involved that there is a real need for provision of this kind, despite the generally weak position of minority language and culture teaching.

7.5. EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS

The number of young people who leave school without adequate qualifications is unacceptably high. The problem of early school leavers is not new, and many policy measures have been taken in the last decade and a half in various fields (education, youth services, manpower services, criminal justice), at regional and local as well as national level. A great deal of interdepartmental consultation was called for in order to coordinate these measures. This culminated in the publication in January 1993 of the policy memorandum "A well prepared start", which sets out the government's policy on the problem of early school leavers.

In this memorandum the government sets itself the objective in the space of six years of halving the 'hard core' of 12 500 pupils who leave school every year without any qualifications. The main measures to be taken include the following:

- Schools must cooperate with each other and with outside agencies – notably the municipal authorities, youth services, youth workers, regional career guidance information centres and regional manpower services boards – to prevent pupils leaving school without any qualifications.
- A regional coordination centre will be established in each region to direct early school leavers to suitable forms of education or training. Schools will be obliged to register unqualified school leavers at these centres.
- Many early school leavers are attracted by the idea of having a job and earning their own money. Efforts will be made to ensure that these young people acquire a minimum basic qualification – equivalent to a vocational qualification at junior craftsman level, i.e. the level obtained on completing elementary apprenticeship training or a short senior secondary vocational course (National Vocational Qualification, level II) – through a combination of working and learning. The substantive expertise acquired over the years will be pooled and made available to the relevant institutions in each region to help them achieve this ambitious goal.

The memorandum emphasises that the measures which the government proposes to take are intended to supplement the efforts already being made. Educational institutions and outside agencies are already doing a great deal to offer early school leavers and those at risk of leaving school without any qualifications better prospects for the future. There are special projects for persistent truants and marginalised young people, and schools are developing preventive activities such as counselling and supervision of pupils' progress.

7.6. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Schools for children with sensory and mental handicaps have existed in the Netherlands since the nineteenth century. With the introduction of the first Compulsory Education Act in 1901, the number of special schools mushroomed.

On 1 August 1985, the **Special Education Interim Act (ISOVSO)** came into force for a period of ten years. Until then, special education had been governed by the Special Education Decree 1967, an Order in Council issued pursuant to the Primary Education Act of 1920. The new-style **schools for special primary and special secondary education** therefore began operating on the same date as the new-style, integrated primary schools.

The Interim Act adopts a dual approach, containing, wherever possible, provisions similar to those applying to ordinary primary schools, while at the same time paying attention to the distinctive features of special schools. The cross-links with the new Primary Education Act are important since the Interim Act aims to encourage the transfer of pupils from special to ordinary schools where possible (integration).

Special primary schools cater for children aged from 3 or 4 to 12 years. Special secondary schools take pupils from the age of 12 up to about 20.

Special education is provided in separate schools catering for either the primary or secondary age group or both. There are both publicly and privately run special schools.

Pupils with a mental and/or physical handicap are usually referred to a special school. Since the introduction of the Special Education Interim Act, government policy has been geared to curbing the growth of special education, partly with a view to ensuring the uninterrupted development of pupils and partly for financial reasons.

As part of the "**Going to School Together**" project, pupils who might otherwise be transferred to a school for children with learning difficulties (MLK) or learning and behavioural difficulties (LOM) or a unit for pre-school children with developmental difficulties (IOBK) will in future be given more appropriate care in ordinary primary schools than has been possible to date. Ordinary schools will bear primary responsibility for all children. Provision will also be made for children with special needs of other kinds to attend ordinary schools, where schools and parents are both agreed. This applies to deaf and partially hearing children and those with severe speech disorders who do not fall into either of these categories, the blind and partially sighted, physically handicapped children, children in hospitals and the chronically sick, children with severe learning difficulties (ZMLK), severely maladjusted children (ZMOK), children in schools attached to paedological institutes and children with multiple handicaps. A new Act will come into force in 1994, setting out a new approach to peripatetic supervision, admissions and provision for children with special needs in ordinary schools. The Going to School Together Project Act, as it is called, also supports the establishment of cooperative links between MLK, LOM and IOBK schools and ordinary primary schools.

Children can be referred to special schools in two ways. Either children may suffer from handicaps of such a kind that it is obvious from an early age that they will have to be referred to a special school or a child who has attended an ordinary school for some time may be referred by that school to a special school.

A board comprising a number of experts, such as a psychologist or educationist, social worker and doctor, headed by the headteacher of the special school concerned, assesses whether a particular child is eligible for admission to the school and produces a report for the competent authority of the school, which has the final say over whether or not the child is admitted. Pupils placed in a special school are reassessed by the board after two years.

The same objectives – to reduce the number of pupils in special secondary schools and cater for a wider range of special needs in ordinary schools – apply at secondary level. An analysis of this problem, entitled "The Breadth of Basic Secondary Education", appeared in April 1993. Policy measures will be implemented as from 1998. The possibility is being considered of bringing special secondary education under the scope of the Secondary Education Act when the Special Education Interim Act expires. There is a project promoting links between special and ordinary secondary schools which runs until 1 August 1995.

8. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The support structure consists of various organisations whose task it is to increase the capacity of schools to solve any problems they may encounter in realising their objectives and, at the same time, systematically to develop and improve teaching. The services provided relate to educational theory and teaching methods, subject content, educational psychology, school organisation and innovation.

8.2. EDUCATION SUPPORT STRUCTURE ACT (WOV)

The **Education Support Structure Act (WOV)** accords exclusive responsibility for certain support tasks to the organisations identified in the Act. The legislation came into force in 1987 and will remain effective until 1 January 1997, after which time it will be replaced by new legislation.

The Act distinguishes between general and specialised support organisations. The work of the general support services is geared to promoting the operation of the school as a whole. The specialised support services operate in the field of educational research, educational measurement and curriculum development. The **general support services** include the **school counselling services** and the **national educational advisory centres**. The school counselling services operate at regional or – in special cases – national level. Their role is to support the school as a whole and give guidance to individual pupils. Their work is geared mainly to primary schools and some types of special school (primary and secondary level).

There are three national educational advisory centres: the **Educational Advisory Centre (APS)** for non-denominational schools, the **Protestant Educational Advisory Centre (CPS)** and the **Catholic Educational Advisory Centre (KPC)**. Their work encompasses counselling and development activities, evaluation, and providing advice and information for secondary schools throughout the country. They also provide services for colleges and university departments responsible for training primary, special and secondary school teachers and coordinate the implementation of national educational innovation policy. Lastly, they also support the school counselling services.

The three specialised support organisations are the **Institute for Educational Research (SVO)**, the **National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO)** and the **National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO)**.

The SVO promotes and coordinates research for the benefit of primary, secondary and special education and teacher training. It does not carry out any research itself, but draws up research programmes and provides grants for educational research.

CITO develops tests for primary, secondary and special education and teacher training colleges and departments. At the Minister's request it also devises examination papers and provides supplementary services in connection with examinations.

The SLO develops master teaching plans and models, or alternative models, for school work plans and sections of school work plans for primary, secondary and special schools and teacher training colleges and departments. It also promotes the coordination of curriculum development work and keeps a central register of teaching materials.

9. EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

9.1. INTRODUCTION

When the new Primary Education Act came into force in 1985, provision was made for a periodic evaluation of the new system of primary education. The first of these evaluations was completed in 1988 and its findings are contained in a policy document entitled "So much ground covered and still so far to go". The second evaluation was planned for 1991. A provisional committee was set up under the chairmanship of the Education Inspectorate to evaluate primary education (the **Primary Education Evaluation Committee** or CEB). Its report, entitled "**Focus on quality**" appeared in January 1994.

In addition, the government is bound under the Constitution to submit an annual report to Parliament on the state of education. This report – the **Education Report** – has consisted in recent years of three parts, one of which contains the findings of the Education Inspectorate. The Inspectorate has been asked by the Minister to compile the entire raport as of the 1993 report year.

9.2. "SO MUCH GROUND COVERED AND STILL SO FAR TO GO"

The policy document of this name, which was presented to Parliament in July 1990, contains an evaluation of the implementation of the Primary Education Act over the period 1985 to 1988. These are some of the conclusions drawn.

- The gap between the objectives of the Act and actual practice in schools is still too great in many cases.
- One third of primary schools still have separate nursery and junior school departments.
- Many schools regard the compilation of a school work plan as a burden imposed on them from above.
- Too little attention is paid on the whole to expressive activities.
- Intercultural education is proving difficult to give shape to.
- The results as far as the teaching of English in primary schools is concerned have been positive.

The document was debated by Parliament in January 1991. Parliament then called for an independent review of the situation in primary schools and the Primary Education Evaluation Committee was set up. The Committee's final report, entitled "Focus on quality" was presented to the Minister in January 1994.

9.3. "FOCUS ON QUALITY"

The Primary Education Evaluation Committee produced four sub-reports and a final report, entitled "Focus on quality" (January 1994), which described actual developments in primary schools. The Committee concluded, among other things, that:

- the output of primary schools, in terms of educational attainment, could be improved substantially in several important areas, especially productive language skills, i.e. writing (composition) and speaking, and parts of reading for comprehension;
- pupils from ethnic minorities were falling behind to an alarming extent;

- the present curriculum cannot be delivered within the teaching time available;
- the government had overestimated the rate of change and the capacity for change of primary schools.

The report proposes an integrated package of mutually supportive measures for improving the situation in primary schools. The Committee's recommendations are intended to enable schools to focus on their core tasks (restriction and improvement of the curriculum).

9.4. EDUCATION INSPECTORATE

The Education Inspectorate is responsible for inspecting both public-authority and private schools on the authority of the Minister for Education. Its duties in all branches of education are:

- to ensure compliance with statutory regulations (control);
- to keep up to date with the state of education, for example by visiting schools (evaluation);
- to promote the development of education through consultation with the competent authorities, school staff and regional and local authorities (stimulating role);
- to report to and advise the Minister, either upon request or on its own initiative.

These tasks together form an integrated whole.

The Inspectorate was reorganised at the end of the 1980s, with the result that there are now 12 offices throughout the country instead of 135. The Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries is responsible for the inspection of agricultural education; the Agricultural Education Inspectorate has six regional offices.

Since 1993, the Education Inspectorate has operated under the **Education Inspectorate Autonomous Status Regulations,** as laid down by the Minister for Education, supplemented by a management contract. The original intention was to convert the Inspectorate into an independent administrative authority. This would require an Act of Parliament to be passed. In October 1992, however, the government decided not to proceed any further with the relevant bill. It was decided for the time being to make an internal arrangement giving the Inspectorate as much independence as possible without altering the matter of ministerial responsibility.

MAIN SOURCES USED

Voortijdig schoolverlaten (Early school leaving), letter from the Minister for Education and Science of 20 January 1993, note (parliamentary dossier No 1992/93, 22994).

Vakkencombinaties (Combinations of subjects), letter from the State Secretary for Education and Science of 17 September 1992, covering letter (parliamentary dossier No 1992/93, 22832).

Evaluatie van de Wet op het basisonderwijs (Evaluation of the Act on basic education), letter from the State Secretary for Education and Science of 2 July 1990, note (parliamentary dossier No 1989/90, 21630).

Beleidspunten leraren in samenhang (Policy points in relation to teachers), letter from the Minister for Education and Science of 13 February 1989, note (parliamentary dossier No 1988/89, 21026).

AUSTRIA

1. INTRODUCTION

The following study outlines the major reforms introduced between 1984 and 1994 in compulsory education, at the following levels:

- *Volksschule* (primary school)
- *Hauptschule* (secondary general school)
- *Sonderschule* (special school),
- *Polytechnischer Lehrgang* (pre-vocational year).

A global look at the development of the Austrian education system since the implementation of the 1962 Basic Act on School Organisation reveals that there has not been one predominant reform, but a continuous process of change (15 amendments to the School Organisation Act in 30 years). A comparative assessment of the amended legal texts clearly reflects the social, educational and pedagogical change which has taken place.

2. REFORMS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF MAIN REFORMS

2.1.1. SCHOOL EXPERIMENTS IN THE ADMISSION AREA (SECTION 131C, SCHOOL ORGANISATION ACT)

School experiments launched at the start of the school year 1987/88 in Vienna, and later in the other provinces, were characterised by the following aims:

- avoidance of selection at the beginning of schooling;
- neutralisation of the experience of failure, as created by repeating years, through organisational means;
- principle of individual assistance;
- reduction in the number of years being lost during school education by bringing down the number of children requiring three years for primary level I;
- instruction based on assistance, rather than on selection;
- no relegation;
- facilitated use of different curricula;
- stable social groups;
- phases of sudden development during the primary school age are taken into account;
- closer co-operation among teachers;
- the decision whether a child needs a third year to complete primary level I rests on a valid assessment of attainment.

Several models are being tested currently in experiments addressing the admission area. These experiments will be adopted in standard education within the next school years. In the different provinces, the schemes are run under different names.

2.1.2. ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Several forms of assessment are currently being tested. They are the product of decade-long debate on performance assessment.

Launched 30 years ago, this discussion was to generate an interchange with pupils and parents that was more individually and dialogue-oriented. Research conducted in this field has repeatedly emphasised the relativity of grades (scale of marks). The new approaches are a step towards a system of assessment which is as fair and equitable as possible.

Respecting the school partnership provisions, pilot schemes on alternative performance assessment may be run from year one to the end of the first term in year 4.

2.1.3. PROMOTION OF FOREIGN-LANGUAGE LEARNING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

The 1983 amendment to the curriculum prescribed initial foreign language learning on a compulsory basis to the extent of 1 weekly unit in years 3 and 4. Initial foreign-language teaching is delivered through the communicative approach. The subject Foreign Language is not evaluated by marks; but attendance is certified in the school reports. Foreign-language instruction was run as a pilot scheme at primary level I in the school year 1991/92; the underlying idea was to develop foreign language skills at an early stage of school education. The provision of foreign-language instruction from year 1 is currently being discussed in the context of school autonomy (allowing schools to opt for individual foreign-language teaching arrangements).

2.1.4. OTHER SCHOOL EXPERIMENTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Projects such as computer-assisted instruction, pre-school classes with a focus on musical education and small-sized schools reflect the efforts undertaken to respond more adequately to children's aptitudes and interests in the light of social developments. Special mention should be made of the increased efforts which small schools in rural areas have been making towards a transition from segregation-based departmental instruction to integration-based models through internal differentiation (currently in the pilot phase).

2.1.5. FULL-DAY SCHOOLING

Full-day schooling experiments were run between 1974 and 1993, mainly in the form of the full-day school, open school, and day-boarding schools (in the private sector). In 1993, these models were adopted in the standard education system. This has prompted a multiplication of the number of full-day schools in response to demand.

Generally, the full-day provision of care includes instruction proper, optional exercises, lunch, and subject-related or individual leisure time.

2.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENT OF REFORMS IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

2.2.1. AIMS

The main aims or goals proposed for the educational system by the above reforms are the following.

- The reforms in the admission area and the use of alternative methods of performance assessment are to ensure motivation at the start of schooling. The principle of child-orientation has been embedded in the new curriculum for primary schools.
- The promotion of foreign-language learning enhances the early acquisition of a foreign language.
- Intercultural learning promotes equal opportunities and education for tolerance.

2.2.2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Objectivation procedures have been introduced in all provinces for the appointment of school heads. Similar measures are under way for the appointment of school supervision officials (e.g. district school inspectors).

2.2.3. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOLS

The school partnership bodies (viz. the *Klassenforum* (class forum), the *Schulforum* (school forum), and the *Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss* for secondary academic schools) were introduced in 1986.

The class forum/school forum will decide on the following matters:

- planning of school events,
- decision to run school experiments,
- decision to run schools on a 5-day or 6-day basis,
- setting of school holidays under the autonomy provisions
- adoption of curricular provisions under school autonomy,
- fundamental issues of teaching,
- house rules etc.

2.2.4. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

This heading covers primarily the pilot schemes on the reform of the admission area.

2.2.5. CURRICULUM

In the reporting period, the following curricular reforms were implemented:

2.2.5.1. MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT PRIMARY LEVEL II (CURRICULAR REFORM OF 1983)

(see 2.1.3.)

Besides, road safety education was introduced as a compulsory exercise. An acknowledged principle of instruction, this education has been included in the general teaching plan for years 1 to 4 (10 annual units).

2.2.5.2. THE 1986 REFORM OF THE CURRICULUM FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The 1986 curricular amendment was the last major reform shaping the system of primary education in Austria, after the introduction of remedial teaching in primary schools in 1965, its expansion to years 1 to 4 in 1979, and the implementation of coeducational teaching for handicraft.

This reform was pinned on the following ideas: conveyance of a joint elementary education for all pupils, the prevalence of the principle of educational assistance, integration of pre-school and primary school education, recognition of new didactic findings in elementary education. Principles such as child-orientation, action-orientation, openness, intercultural learning etc. prevailed.

2.2.5.3. CURRICULAR AMENDMENT: GERMAN FOR PUPILS WITH A MOTHER TONGUE OTHER THAN GERMAN

The curricular provisions on the General Educational Aims of Primary Education read as follows: *"Primary education is entrusted with a special socio-educational task wherever it can promote intercultural learning, as children with German and non-German mother tongues are taught together"*. Intercultural learning in all its manifestations, with special emphasis on the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups, will have to be implemented particularly in those provinces where ethnic groups exist, or where Austrian and non-Austrian children are taught together.

The new curriculum contains provisions on mother-tongue instruction, to which it assigns three tasks:

- strengthening of the mother-tongue/ primary tongue as a basis for the educational process as such, and for the acquisition of additional languages;
- conveyance of knowledge on the country of origin (culture, literature, social structure, economic and political situation etc.);
- addressing the bi-cultural process (i.e. migrant culture, new conditions of socialisation, new cultural environment, potentials for socio-cultural and psycho-social conflict etc.).

2.2.5.4. FORMS OF LEARNING

New and emerging forms of learning at primary level include: open learning and project-oriented learning, investigative learning, playful learning.

2.2.6. TEACHER TRAINING

- adoption of school autonomy in the training concept,
- new study regulations for primary school teachers (harmonisation with the six-semester training course for secondary general school and special school teachers).

2.2.7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

- Curriculum for German amended (see 2.2.5.)
- mother-tongue instruction (currently offered in Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Polish, Serbian, Slovenian, Turkish etc.).
- Integration of handicapped children in primary education.

2.2.8. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Establishment of different counselling services (e.g. school service, counselling for migrants, regional guidance centres, Special Education Centres etc.)

2.2.9. EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION

All school experiments are subject to evaluation, e.g.

- school projects in the admission area
- integration of handicapped children
- modern foreign language at primary level I
- language acquisition, a pilot study conducted by the *Pädagogisches Institut* of the City of Vienna in co-operation with the Municipal School Board in Vienna (to study language acquisition by migrant children).

3. REFORMS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF MAIN REFORMS

Access for children with special educational needs to mainstream education was the main reform in special education.

Prior to the implementation of the reform, disabled children were taught in different kinds of special schools, depending on the nature and extent of their handicap.

Historically, the establishment of special schools was an almost revolutionary step. It started with eliminating the century-old social marginalisation and isolation of disabled persons and has led to the general recognition of the right of disabled children to education today. The progressive expansion and differentiation of special education led to a number of experiences which increasingly questioned the usefulness of special schools. Special schooling is always associated with social stigmatisation. Grouping disabled children together means less opportunity for important social interaction and makes a positive transformation of socio-emotional characteristics difficult to achieve. A growing number of parents refused to have their children sent to special schools, so that many children no longer received the therapeutic help they required. Parental protest against segregation by special schooling eventually led to a drastic drop in the number of pupils enrolled in special schools.

Since 1984, parents of handicapped and of non-handicapped children have been calling for alternatives to special education in the context of a pronounced and comprehensive process of social change. These demands were supported by a very small proportion of teachers, who were prepared to conduct school experiments on integration with commitment and dedication. The school authorities, reluctant and even resistant in the beginning, finally came to support these school experiments, as the integration of handicapped persons became a policy objective upheld by all political parties.

In 1984, the Austrian study group for rehabilitation, the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Austrian National Committee, adopted the following guidelines:

- Handicapped children shall be admitted to kindergarten, creating additional demand for staff and auxiliary resources. Initiatives launched by parental associations in this context shall be supported.
- Pre-school years are to be established for children with sensory and multiple handicaps.
- Handicapped children shall, if possible, remain in the care of their families.
- Whenever the nature and extent of the handicap requires additional help, this help should as a matter of principle be delivered to the child, for instance by special school teachers assigned to compulsory schools. Moreover, sufficient auxiliary staff shall be available to provide adequate care for handicapped children.
- Special schools must not be run as isolated institutions, but offer the full range of opportunities for encounter and joint activities with general schools.
- Specialist services (supervision, counsellors, therapists) shall be available to handicapped children, their parents and teachers during the entire time of education.
- Special learning aids shall be made available to handicapped children free of charge.
- No child shall be prevented from attending an adequate educational institution on the grounds of lack of transport facilities. Those children who are unable to use public transport shall be taken to school by a special transport service.
- Career opportunities which take account of labour market developments shall be created for handicapped adolescents who are unable to undergo training within a business apprenticeship scheme or in a training workshop.

These very vague and imprecise demands prompted two major developments in the educational system: the joint education of handicapped and non-handicapped children, and education for children who were exempt from schooling hitherto. Whereas the integration of handicapped children has met with lively public interest, children with multiple handicaps are still barely catered for at all. Both approaches have confronted schools with a vast need for innovation.

When it came to developing reforms, all groups involved (parents, school authorities, teachers, policy-makers, media) ultimately made their contributions.

Although the different groups adopted contrasting standpoints, dialogue always remained open, so that one of the largest internal school reforms could be implemented within a span of ten years. The timetable of this reform was as follows:

1984	The first integration class was set up (under section 7 of the School Organisation Act) in Oberwart, Burgenland.
1985-88	Association of parental initiatives, first symposia on integration were held, integration classes set up under section 7 of the School Organisation Act in the provinces of Styria, Tyrol and Vienna, a ministerial study group (of official representatives, parents, affected persons and experts) was set up, first evaluation of the school experiments by the Centre for School Experiments in Graz. Basic ordinance on "Children with physical or sensory handicaps in education" was issued in 1986 to govern the integration of children with physical and sensory handicaps in the Austrian system of education.
1988	Creation of the legal framework for integrated schooling experiments (section 131a, School Organisation Act) with Amendment 11 to the School Organisation Act and a framework concept of the implementation of these school experiments by the Federal Ministry of Education and the Arts. The number of classes in which school experiments were held was limited to 10% of all special-school classes in a province. Scientific guidance was introduced in all provinces.
1991	The 10% limit was stepped up to 20%, as the number of pilot classes had increased dramatically in some provinces. Nation-wide evaluation of the school experiments by the Centre for School Development in Graz, in co-operation with the experts who had provided the professional guidance for the experiments .
1992	Discussion within the School Reform Commission.
1993	Integration adopted in the standard school system, although limited to primary education (15th Amendment to the School Organisation Act), and continuation of school experiments aiming at integration at secondary level I.

3.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE REFORMS MADE IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

3.2.1. AIMS

Consistent with the provisions of section 131a of the School Organisation Act, the school experiments were aimed at providing joint education for handicapped and non-handicapped children. The framework includes four basically different models with a different scope and degree of experimentation. These four models are described below.

3.2.1.1. THE INTEGRATED CLASS MODEL

This embraces most fully the original intentions of the parental initiative groups. As a matter of principle, handicapped children are not excluded as a function of the nature and severity of their handicap. Different curricula may be determined, either fully or in parts, for each child after an observation phase. Special educational assistance is offered as required by way of internal differentiation.

3.2.1.2. THE COOPERATIVE CLASS MODEL

This is a model based on spatial integration. The closest possible spatial connection between a special school class and a primary school class is to facilitate social interaction between handicapped and non-handicapped children. Instruction may be joint in subjects with less focus on attainment, and in school events. The organisation of the school remains unaffected by this model.

3.2.1.3. THE ASSISTANCE OR SMALL-CLASS MODEL

This is an integration model with identical objectives, initiated by the school authorities. Small classes provide the required educational setting which helps to overcome learning difficulties and behavioural problems. This model excludes a priori severely handicapped children. Small classes are affiliated to primary-school classes and are considered primary-school classes in law. In small classes, six to twelve children are taught by a special education teacher according to the primary school curriculum. As under 3.2.1.2., cooperation between small classes and primary school classes is desired.

3.2.1.4. THE SUPPORT TEACHER MODEL

This is used where a 20% average of handicapped children is not attained, and where special education teachers can be used on a part-time basis only. Support teachers are to assist handicapped children flexibly in response to their needs, so that they can fully participate in mainstream instruction.

Recognising the need for wide-ranging organisational arrangements required to ensure full-cover integration, legislation was not limited to one model when adopting integration into the standard school systems but laid the basis for schools to provide for the joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped children flexibly and autonomously, if required by the parents of handicapped children. How the parental right to choose is implemented in practical terms rests at the discretion of the provinces.

The same models are now being tested for secondary level I with the same objective in mind, so that a legal basis can be developed for this area for the school year 1996/97.

3.2.2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In this field, only the position of parents has changed. Children with slight handicaps used to be provisionally admitted to primary school. If they could not follow instruction due to their physical and mental handicap, proceedings were instituted for a referral to special school, ending with the delivery of an official notice. These proceedings were based on a special pedagogical expert opinion and parents were not involved in the process. Although the parents had a right of appeal against the notice issued by the administrative authorities at district level, second-instance decisions could not be appealed against: the child had to attend special school, unless the means of getting there were unacceptable. For pupils with severe handicaps, such notices were issued at the moment of registration. Children with severe handicaps could be exempted from compulsory schooling at any time, and therefore excluded from the education process.

With the adoption of integration in mainstream education, the Compulsory Schooling Act was amended. The notice of "referral to a special school", issued by the District School Authorities was replaced by a notice "asserting special educational needs". This procedure has remained unchanged in its basic features. At the request of the parents, the school, or at their own instigation the District School Authorities, will commission an expert pedagogical opinion. As a new feature, parents are now allowed to commission and present expert opinions on their part. Once it has been assessed that special educational needs exist, a decision is then made where and how such special educational assistance can best be provided. If parents wish their child to be educated at a mainstream school, the district school authorities will have to ensure that the child can attend the nearest primary school which can provide the special educational assistance required. Parents may demand that an oral hearing be held involving all those concerned (school authorities, headmaster, teachers, experts) before a decision is taken. While the procedure has remained unchanged in its essential features, the position of parents has been strengthened considerably.

In order to fund the implementation of integration, the number of planned posts for special education teachers provided by the Federal government to the provinces has been slightly increased. The allocation of teaching posts is left to the provinces.

To assist the district school inspectors in this additional task, a constitutional provision has been included which allows the collegiate Province School Boards to designate special schools as Special Education Centres (SEC). Each Special Education Centre shall "ensure that all children with special educational needs are taught as best as possible in general schools by providing and co-ordinating special educational measures in other types of schools" (section 27a, School Organisation Act). These centres are to take over responsibility for systematic training, exchanges of experiences, and evaluation, which had been entrusted to scientific guidance institutions during the experimental phase.

3.2.3. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOLS

It is the mandate of primary school to ensure a common elementary education which takes account of the need for social integration. To practically implement the concept of integration, the legislator decided to lay down in law such arrangements as did not necessitate a far-ranging change in the organisational structure of the Austrian system of education. Special education teachers are not assigned to the standard teaching pool, and therefore do not enjoy the status of class teachers with equal rights, but to a contingency reserve from which additional teachers are allocated to primary schools whenever needed. The decision on the extent to which special school teachers are used is left to the District School Councils. The Special Education Centres have been working for a closer involvement of schools in this decision-making process.

Similar arrangements are expected for secondary level I, where schools, in particular the *allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen* (secondary academic schools), enjoy more leeway in decision-making.

3.2.4. CURRICULUM

In Austria, each type of school is governed by a standard national framework curriculum, which is adjusted by the teachers to the conditions of each individual school. The curriculum is divided by years according to age. Integrated education experiments revealed that the strict division by subjects prevents rather than promotes the joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped children. Open forms of learning such as weekly work plans, free learning, project instruction and learning by playing, project-oriented learning and investigative learning, which have been included in the curriculum for primary schools since 1985, have gained a more prominent place in primary education through integration. At the level of secondary general school *(Hauptschule)* and the lower cycle of the academic secondary school *(allgemeinbildende höhere Schule)*, the abandonment of subject-linked instruction at hourly intervals is more difficult. School experiments have shown that project-oriented and open learning makes sense and is feasible also in this area.

Integration did not change the general structure of the curriculum, though the schools now enjoy more latitude in decision-making. Since 1993, for example, all special schools may use the curricula for primary schools and secondary general schools, and vice versa, primary schools may apply the special school curricula, either partly or in full. The decision whether and to what extent children with special educational needs are taught according to the special school curriculum lies with the District School Boards. Parents have the right to appeal against this decision, issued in the form of an official notice.

3.2.5. TEACHER TRAINING

The success of integration depends on the dedication, skills and attitude of teachers. Evaluation conducted by the Centre for School Development has shown that successful team teaching between the special school teachers and primary school teachers is a key factor to the successful implementation of integration. Throughout decades, class teachers in Austria have worked as "lone fighters", and could hardly imagine cooperating with their counterparts. This fear to venture into something new and unknown can be overcome by granting the teachers a say in the selection of their team partners, and by affording them an opportunity to familiarise themselves with their respective educational principles and beliefs in joint training programmes.

Accordingly, a system of in-service training and further education for integration teachers was introduced during the experimental phase. Apart from regular updates and exchanges of experiences, two or three-semester training programmes were designed. They have meanwhile become an integral part of the courses offered within further education and training programmes. In initial teacher training, integration was included as a compulsory elective subject and in teaching-practice events. The adoption of integration in standard education in 1993 prompted a debate on the need to modify the curriculum of the teacher training colleges. The solution most likely to be adopted is that of a core area on integration in all teacher-training study courses, that will replace the former additional courses, alternative elective subjects, and extension of existing subjects by the main contents of integrated education.

Subject teachers, with a large degree of independence so far, must now regularly co-ordinate and harmonise their contents and objectives, an uncommon practice to date. The additional input required has a deterrent effect, while the extra amount of professional satisfaction gained is still insufficiently appreciated.

3.2.6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

The joint instruction of handicapped and non-handicapped children compensates for inequalities caused by segregation, such as the exclusion from the neighbourhood community, stigmatisation, and diminished job opportunities. Throughout the entire reform, no attempt was made to bring the efforts at integrating children with a mother tongue other than German into the process.

This loss of stigma has become evident by the fact that parents are increasingly willing to have their children assessed for special educational needs, if they can remain at primary school. Since staff resources in Austria are tied to the number of children with special educational needs, children underperforming in partial areas only run the risk of being classified as children with special educational needs. To avoid this effect, the term "special educational needs" has been defined in identical terms as the pre-reform notion of "in need of special schooling". Accordingly, Federal legislation is based on the assumption that the long-term average of approx. 2.7% of handicapped children will not rise substantially after the adoption of integration into mainstream education. Anything else would cause a dramatic increase of costs and render the systematic provision for special educational needs financially unviable.

3.2.7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Austria has an institutionalised system of auxiliary school psychologists. These school psychologists act as contacts and counsellors for parents and teachers encountering learning difficulties and problems in education. Subject to parental approval, they may be involved as experts in the process of determining special educational needs. In addition to the school psychological counselling services, the 15th Amendment to the School Organisation Act provides for the establishment of special educational counselling centres, which act in close conjunction with the District School Boards and the schools. For the first time, Austrian schools are expressly assigned a counselling competence, which had to be laid down in constitutional legislation. As for the present, it is hard to predict how the co-operation between the two institutions will develop. Most certainly, the provinces will adopt arrangements of their own.

3.2.8. EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION

With the school experiments on integration, the evaluation of school experiments was decentralised and assigned to the provinces. While the Federal Ministry of Education financed a person in charge of scientific evaluation in each province and bore the overall responsibility, the selection of persons and the detailed assignment of tasks was left to each province. In scientific guidance, the focus has now shifted to an action-research approach with a qualitative orientation. In large-scale empirical evaluation projects, scientists will cooperate with the Centre for School Development run by the Federal Ministry of Education Department II in Graz. On some issues, scientific research institutes (private or university-based) were contracted. Equally, the representatives of the school authorities (province and district school inspectors) were involved in the further development of integration. Comprehensive results, in terms of quality and in terms of quantity, from the evaluation of integrated education experiments are available.

4. REFORMS IN THE *HAUPTSCHULE* (SECONDARY GENERAL SCHOOL)

4.1. DESCRIPTION OF MAIN REFORMS

In the Austrian system of education, *Hauptschule* (secondary general school) is the main school for children aged 10-14. The parallel lower cycle of the *Gymnasium* (secondary academic school) is designed for particularly gifted pupils.

The Austrian School Organisation Act defines the mandate of the *Hauptschule* as follows:

- to convey a fundamental general education in a four-year course of education;
- to qualify pupils for working life and for transition to a medium or higher-level secondary school in line with their interests, talents, gifts and capabilities.

Up to 1985, the *Hauptschule* was run in two streams. High-performing pupils attended stream one, while less performing pupils were assigned to stream two. In 1985, this system was changed by the introduction of the integrated *Hauptschule*, with ability grouping in German, Foreign Language, and Mathematics.

In 1986, the rights of co-determination for parents and guardians were reinforced considerably and institutionalised. Ever since, the rights of the school partnership bodies then established (school forum, class forum) have been continuously expanded. In addition to their counselling function, these school partnership bodies enjoy major decision-making rights on issues relating to the curriculum, the time-table, and the organisation of school events etc.

The 14th Amendment to the School Organisation Act created the legal framework for school autonomy, which accorded greater leeway to schools in taking site-specific decisions on curricular and organisational matters, and thus opened up new opportunities for developing distinct school profiles.

Other measures designed to further develop the Austrian system of education at secondary level related to the following areas:

- equality of women and men;
- the systematic support of pupils with a mother tongue other than German;
- school experiments on major educational issues.

1984

1985 reform of the *Hauptschule*

introduction of ability grouping — accompanying school experiments on major educational issues

1986	institutionalisation of school partnership bodies	measures to attain the equality of men and women
1987		
1988		
1989		systematic measures to promote children with a mother tongue other than German
1990		
1991		
1992		
1993	school autonomy	
1994		

4.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE REFORMS MADE IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

4.2.1. AIMS

As stated in the introduction, the *Hauptschule* was run in two streams until 1985.

The two-stream *Hauptschule* system was criticised on the following grounds:

- Pupils were graded by their weakest performance (pupils with good language skills and poor mathematical skills would inevitably end up in stream two).
- For pupils in stream two, instruction in a Modern Foreign Language (English in most cases) is offered as an optional subject only.
- The system does not allow for compensatory measures; transition to other forms of schooling, while provided for in legislation, is restricted to a downward transition.

The introduction of the integrated *Hauptschule* was to create a system which accommodates these criticisms:

- Pupils are now graded regardless of their performance in heterogeneous core classes, with three ability groups (ability levels) in German, English and Mathematics. Under the law, the requirements in the uppermost level must be identical to those in the lower cycle of secondary academic school. All other subjects are taught in heterogeneous core classes.
- Modern Foreign Language is a compulsory subject for all pupils.
- Remedial teaching is introduced to support upgrading to the next higher level, and to prevent a downgrading to the next lower level. Remedial classes are offered as courses (remedial courses). Before downgrading pupils to a lower level, the school must offer compulsory remedial courses to pupils as a compensatory measure.

With the implementation of the 1985 school reform, new curricula were issued, which were to take account of the new situation in the general provisions, the time-tables and the subject curricula. These curricula allow for special-interest schools within the standard *Hauptschule* system, which is a uniquely Austrian feature. The following special-interest schools have been set up within the standard *Hauptschule* system: with a special focus on musical education, with a special focus on sports education and with a special focus on ski-sports education.

In addition to the subject curricula, the Austrian curriculum uses the notion of "instruction principles", which are understood as interdisciplinary objectives, and constitute important fundamental principles of education. Instruction principles are defined as a combination of contents-related, methodological and educational requirements and are to clearly reflect current trends and developments in education. The 1985 curricula refer to the following instruction principles: health education, reading education, media education, musical education, political education (including civics and education for peace), sex education, speech education, environmental education, road safety education, business education (including saving, and consumer education) and preparation for working life (job education).

Another specific element in the Austrian system of education is school events. Under the law, they are to complement curricular instruction by affording immediate and tangible contact with business, social and cultural life, by furthering musical talents and physical training. Examples of school events are hiking days and outings, summer sports weeks, winter sports weeks, project weeks (e.g. music weeks, ecology weeks, intensive language-learning weeks, creative weeks etc.), and exchange programmes (with international school classes).

At the level of the *Hauptschule*, the major reform came with the 14th Amendment to the School Organisation Act of 1993, which accorded individual schools major responsibilities with a view to deregulating and decentralising the system of education, by allowing for autonomy in education. Seen from a historical perspective, one can rightly speak of a change of paradigms in the Austrian system of education, which was traditionally built around highly centralised regulations and measures.

Within a prescribed limit, schools may decide on the following areas under the autonomy provisions:

- number of weekly hours for each subject (time-table);
- content-related matters concerning the individual subject curricula;
- figures for dividing or setting up classes for individual subjects;
- organisation and contents of remedial instruction.

Concurrently, the Ordinance on School Events was amended. The only differentiation retained is that between one-day and several-day events. The schools are free to decide on contents and organisational matters within a prescribed framework.

4.2.2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following trends have emerged from the developments of recent years:

- The Federal level assigned some of its rights (e.g. curricular competence) to the level of the individual schools.
- Increasingly, rights are transferred (from the authorities) to the school partnership bodies established in 1986, in which parents and teachers participate.

In contrast to the Federally-operated schools, financial and staff autonomy at the compulsory school level play an insignificant role in further deregulation measures.

4.2.3. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

While school communities (associations of pupil-generating communities) are responsible for the maintenance of compulsory schools, the local communities have no say in the management of these schools, the recruitment of teachers, and the day-to-day business.

The school heads are responsible for the pedagogical and administrative management of schools. It is within provincial competence to decide on the mode of appointment of school heads. In recent years, all provinces have made great efforts to appoint school heads according to more objective criteria.

In all future appointments, school heads will be appointed for a fixed term (4 years initially). After this probationary period, the school head may be removed by a joint action taken by the school authorities and the school forum.

In 1986, the school forum and class forum were institutionalised as school partnership bodies in compulsory education. Initially conceived as consultative bodies, the school forum and class forum are increasingly becoming decision-making bodies. The class forum is made up of parents and the head teacher. The school forum (which is the de facto decision-making body) is composed on a parity basis of parent representatives from the different classes, and the head teachers, and presided over by the school head. In recent years, the school forum has been increasingly endowed with decision-making rights, e.g. in matters relating to the planning of school events, in the adoption of autonomous curricular provisions, autonomous fixing of the coefficient for dividing and setting up classes, introduction of the five-day week.

4.2.4. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Since 1983, pupils have been graded in one of three ability groups in German, Mathematics, and Modern Foreign Language after a period of observation (generally 8 to 10 weeks). The requirements of the uppermost level are identical to those of the secondary academic school. Instruction is generally given in homogeneous ability groups, which are smaller than the class group. In all other subjects, pupils remain within the class group and are taught jointly.

4.2.5. CURRICULUM

Contents-related changes in the curricula address the **"Equality of women and men".**

- As early as the 1970s, coeducation was introduced as a principle in the Austrian system of education.
- In 1987, Home Economics was made obligatory for both sexes (until then, boys could opt for Geometric Drawing).
- Since 1993, pupils may choose between the compulsory subjects Textile Workshop and Technical Workshop regardless of their sex. (Until then, girls had to enroll in the Textile Workshop, boys in the Technical Workshop).
- Education for the "equality of women and men" was eventually introduced as a new principle of instruction.

The curricular amendments adopted under the concept of "school autonomy" in conjunction with the 14th Amendment to the School Organisation Act of 1993 brought about major changes.

- Until then, the number of hours for each year and subject was prescribed in the timetable. Now, schools may determine the number of hours taught in each subject and year independently for the four-year *Hauptschule* cycle. In Mathematics, for instance, the number of hours set in the curriculum for a four-year period may vary between 15 and 20 hours, between 7 and 12 hours in Geography and Business, and between 12 and 20 hours for Physical Education. Only the total number of hours is fixed (133 hours now, 127 hours from 1996).
- Within this master timetable, schools may now independently decide on a pool of 16 hours (over a four-year period).
- And finally, remedial teaching has been modified in terms of organisation and contents.

Assessing the measures taken under school autonomy, the following trends have emerged:

- Many schools have introduced Social Learning as a new focus. Often, distinct teaching units are devoted to contents taken from this field.
- Emphasis on foreign languages: schools tended to strengthen their foreign-language programmes by stepping up English, or by introducing a second Foreign Language.

- New technologies: schools set priorities in the fields of electronic data processing and computer science.
- Moreover, there has been a wealth of different site-specific initiatives to create distinct school profiles and to set priorities. All this has been in line with a trend in Austrian educational policies of recent and coming years to create synergism in school development by assigning more responsibilities to individual schools.

Austria has a long-standing tradition of school experiments on matters of school organisation and the curriculum. Even before the introduction of the integrated *Hauptschule* in 1985, in-depth preliminary school experiments were carried out on a wide scale.

School experiments in the past decade have addressed the following priorities:

- The difficulties of channelling flows of pupils in an system of education which relies on external differentiation, as outlined in the beginning, gave rise (in conurbations) to the pilot project *neue Mittelschule*, which attempted to bring about structural reform by introducing a system of internal differentiation in an educational set-up which admits all pupils of an age-group (*Gesamtschule*, or joint school for the 10 to 14 age bracket).
- Widely debated, the integration of handicapped pupils in the standard system of schooling, which was finally laid down in law in 1993 for primary education, prompted a wealth of school experiments on the integration of handicapped pupils at secondary level.
- Ability grouping at the *Hauptschule* was felt to be somewhat unsatisfactory and led to school experiments on differentiation, which are to test alternative forms of differentiation by performance.

4.2.6. TEACHER TRAINING

In Austria, compulsory school teachers are trained at non-university teacher-training colleges *(Pädagogische Akademien)*. The training courses to become a primary, secondary general or special school teacher last for 6 semesters. Teachers at secondary general school must pass a subject examination in two specialist fields (German, Foreign Language, or Mathematics plus a second subject).

The following problems have arisen in practice:

- In practical terms, it is virtually impossible for all technical subjects to be taught by qualified teachers who have taken the necessary examinations. Teachers therefore must often teach subjects for which they have no formal qualification (subject examination).
- New challenges imposed on the schools and new subjects (e.g. vocational orientation and career information, computer science) generate new demands. Schools instantly need experts for new tasks, which cannot be supplied as fast as needed through the existing channels of training.
- Advanced educational concepts discard the pure subject-teacher system and promote increased use of small teams of teachers in a class (year), even in secondary education. School experiments carried out in this field have shown that such educational concepts have become an urgent necessity, particularly with regard to the new challenges education is facing (e.g. integration).

For these very reasons, the need arose to qualify teachers for these new requirements in in-service training and development programmes.

National instructor courses have been introduced for both segments of further education and training, which are to train staff specifically for these new tasks in four-semester study programmes.

Looking at the in-service training and further education of teachers, a distinct trend towards internal training and further education has emerged. Many further education demands and the development of school teams can best be addressed by the schools themselves.

4.2.7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

Due to internal factors (e.g. introduction of ability grouping), and external factors (e.g. heavy migration after the Balkan crisis), three large areas for supporting and compensatory measures have evolved in recent years.

The amendment introducing school autonomy in 1993 entailed major changes for remedial instruction.

- Until then, remedial instruction was limited to subjects with differentiated teaching by attainment levels (i.e. German, Foreign Language, Mathematics). Now, remedial instruction is offered to pupils in need of extra care as a compensatory measure for all compulsory subjects.
- Originally, remedial instruction was designed as an additional educational offer for a limited period of time. The new provisions allow for integrated remedial instruction which avoids an excessive burden on less performing pupils. Besides, integrated remedial instruction (a second teacher during given phases of instruction for internal and external differentiation, team teaching) opens up new ways in the development of a distinct remedial methodology.

- The integration of disabled pupils in secondary education has already been treated in a different chapter. Since 1988, integration is governed by special legal provisions which accord school experiment status to integrated education schemes. Experiments have indicated that organisational structures other than ability groups and external differentiation will be required to implement differentiation by performance.
- Since 1988, pilot projects have been conducted to enable special school pupils to acquire *Hauptschule* leaving qualifications after a one-year course.
- A special demand for compensatory measures was created by the need to assist children with a mother tongue other than German:
  - A separate allowance has been designated in the plan of established teaching posts to cater (through integration) for the needs of pupils whose mother tongue is not German (children of foreign workers, refugees).
  - In extreme cases (large number of refugee children after the Balkan war), separate refugee classes were established on a temporary basis, the aim being to achieve integration of the pupils with a mother tongue other than German.
  - Additional mother-tongue instruction is organised for children from other countries.
  - Finally, the idea of learning from one another in a multi-cultural society has become an integral feature of the curricula of compulsory schools, as Intercultural learning was introduced as a principle of instruction in the Austrian curricula.

4.2.8. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

Vocational and career counselling, as well as guidance, have been traditionally accorded high priority in the Austrian system of education.

- A network of counsellors has been installed that is fashioned after the career counselling service introduced in the 1970s. It rests on the idea of providing individual guidance for pupils on all school-related matters. Today, educational counsellors exist at all *Hauptschulen.*
- Vocational orientation and career information was introduced as an optional exercise. Many schools have meanwhile adopted this subject as a compulsory subject under the school autonomy provisions, which give them a certain leeway in curricular design.

- Moreover, the Austrian curriculum specifies "preparation for a career and working life" as a principle of instruction, to be emphasised in years 3 and 4 of the *Hauptschule*.

4.2.9. EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION

The General Instructions on the Implementation of School Inspection of 1983 constitutes an important legal basis which governs the activities of school inspection at Austria's compulsory schools. According to this administrative instruction, school supervision has two main functions:

- it is an inspection body responsible for school supervision;
- it provides pedagogical and administrative guidance to schools.

This 1983 service instruction endows the school inspectorate with a co-ordinating, consultative and conflict-settlement function.

Today, school inspectors define their role mainly as a consultative one. This internal interpretation of the role of school inspection, and the new tasks which have evolved from site-specific developments as a result of school autonomy, have led to a multiplication of the tasks entrusted to the school inspectorates: closer focus on counselling, support for evolutionary and transformation processes at schools, closer focus on ensuring the quality of school, and management skills.

In this area, two distinct trends have emerged:

- Increasingly, teachers and school heads rate the tasks and work of schools as becoming more difficult. More initiative and self-reliance can only be expected from pupils if they receive adequate support and guidance.
- Parents and the public at large tend to place increased hopes on what schools can actually achieve. Today, parents are less prepared to put up with inefficient, repressive or ill-prepared teaching.

In recent years, the image of school supervision has changed dramatically. While the notion of inspection and control prevailed in earlier times, it has been superseded by the principles of counselling and evaluation more recently.

5. REFORMS IN THE *POLYTECHNISCHER LEHRGANG* (PRE-VOCATIONAL YEAR)

5.1. DESCRIPTION OF MAIN REFORMS

In 1966, compulsory schooling was extended to nine years. At the same time, the pre-vocational year was introduced as a new, one-year type of schooling for pupils wanting to take up an occupation or trade immediately after the completion of compulsory schooling. In year nine of compulsory education, pupils are to consolidate their general education with regard to practical life and future employment. Career decisions are to be facilitated by providing for adequate career orientation.

The end of year eight still constitutes a major divide which channels pupils to higher-level general or technical/vocational schools. School-based training remained unaffected by the prolongation of compulsory schooling. The pre-vocational year was introduced as a kind of preliminary stage of vocational training via the dual system (part-time vocational schools in combination with on-the job training). Apprentices started their training one year later. Not fully integrated in the system of education, the pre-vocational year has generated on-going stimulus for reform.

After an experimental period of ten years, the key elements of a first major reform were adopted by law in 1981. Student motivation was enhanced through differentiation by performance (e.g. in the form of ability groups in the compulsory subjects German and Mathematics), and differentiation by interests (by elective compulsory subjects).

The successful completion of the pre-vocational year allows pupils who have completed year 7 only after eight years of schooling, to pass on to a higher-level school at secondary level II. (The "successful completion of year 8" is the condition required for admission to year 1 of a medium or higher-level technical and vocational school, or to year 5 of secondary academic school).

In 1989/90, a Modern Foreign Language became a compulsory subject for all pupils in the pre-vocational year.

School experiments launched in 1992 have focused on higher performance requirements, on the creation of interfaces for transition to year 10 of the technical and vocational schools, as well as on the adoption of school autonomy in line with regional requirements in the curriculum. Reforms after the mid-1990s all responded to government policy programmes which called for greater permeability between different types of school, and for an integration of the pre-vocational year with technical and vocational schooling.

5.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE REFORMS MADE IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

5.2.1. AIMS

On the basis of a comprehensive amendment of the 1982 school Acts, the following reforms were implemented in pre-vocational education:

- greater appeal and better integration of the year in the education system by embedding the notions of differentiation by performance and differentiation by interests in the curricula (pre-vocational year, secondary general school);
- allowance for regional requirements in the curriculum: schools may autonomously decide on some parts of the curriculum (with the school partners being granted a right of say);
- promotion of foreign language instruction (e.g. Modern Foreign Language introduced as a compulsory subject for all pupils);
- basic computer training for all pupils;
- joint training for general secondary school teachers and pre-vocational year teachers;
- further development of the organisation of in-service training of teachers *(Pädagogische Institute)*;
- promotion of individual furtherance of pupils (e.g. by well-designed remedial instruction whenever required);
- measures aiming at an integration of children with impaired performance and children with a mother tongue other than German.

5.2.2. CURRICULUM

The adoption of a large part of the school experiments in the standard system of education (in 1982) was a turning point in general school development. Priorities in school development shifted clearly to the design of new curricular contents and to improving didactics and methodologies (in particular social work forms within the framework of internal school reform).

Pupils in the pre-vocational year were grouped by performance in the compulsory subjects German and Mathematics (in three ability groups), to allow for different educational backgrounds, different levels of motivation, and different levels of performance. Individual remedial measures could be implemented in attainment-centred subjects through better homogeneity of performance and smaller groups. Remedial courses were established to facilitate upgrading to higher ability groups, and to prevent downgrading to lower ability groups.

The introduction of a system of elective compulsory subjects was to promote motivation. This system of elective compulsory subjects makes it possible to adjust the pre-vocational year to pupils' interests and thus helps it to better fulfil its mandate of vocational orientation.

Apart from the introduction of ability grouping in 1981, the new curriculum for the pre-vocational year, adopted in 1989, is yet another major change in the framework provisions which have governed this type of school since it came into being.

A Modern Foreign Language is now compulsory for all pupils at this type of school, just as it is at all schools catering for the 10-14 age bracket. In practical terms, English is preferred, because continued instruction at higher-level schools will most likely be ensured. Apart from English, the curriculum includes French, Croatian, Slovenian, and Hungarian as Modern Foreign Languages. Moreover, pupils may opt for a second Modern Foreign Language in an elective compulsory subject. This measure responds to a growing trend towards a common Europe and cultural interchange across national borders.

For instruction to be efficient, pupils are grouped in the subject Modern Foreign Language, just as in German and Mathematics. These groups account for different levels of performance and different paces of learning (ability grouping).

The system of elective compulsory subjects responds to the needs of differentiation by interests consistent with the mandate of vocational preparation. In addition to the general compulsory subjects (24.5 units per week), pupils may freely select nine weekly units from technical, economic, social/life studies or agricultural subjects.

This curricular amendment granted priority to new technologies. Applied Computer Science was added to the list of elective compulsory subjects. Moreover, the revised curriculum includes Preparation for New Technologies, in particular Communication and Information Technology as a new principle of instruction.

Existing subjects such as Life and Career Studies and Practical Vocational Orientation were amended. In the pre-vocational year, these two subjects have a model function, because they include strong interdisciplinary elements which are close to real-life and vocational practice. Pupils planning to take up dual vocational training (part-time vocational school in combination with on-the-job training) are guided in taking a correct career decision, which in turn will help them to lead a satisfying life.

The new time-table was expanded by one and a half units (now covering a total of 33.5 hours per week), with increased emphasis on job-related and real-life contents. The new curriculum does not take any of the general character from the pre-vocational year, but made adjustments for modern-day developments in terms of contents, technologies, and their practical applications in life.

The 14th amendment to the School Organisation Act in 1993 gave a legal basis to the concept of school autonomy. Schools may now design their own curricula within a centrally prescribed framework and fit them into a binding master plan. For the pre-vocational year, the representative bodies made up of parents, teachers and pupils *(Schulgemeinschaftsausschuss)* are responsible for issuing provisions under school autonomy.

For secondary general school, the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs issued framework regulations in a curricular ordinance in 1993; similar provisions for the pre-vocational year are still pending. Pilot schemes will be conducted in the academic year 1995/96.

Since 1992, an extended offer of interest-based elective compulsory subjects with a view to fundamental vocational training and the acquisition of key skills has been tested in school experiments. The experimental curriculum was modelled on that of other schools (for year 9), so as to include the possibility of transition to higher-level technical and vocational schools without loss of time.

5.2.3. TEACHER TRAINING

Since 1982, teachers for the pre-vocational year have been trained at the teacher-training colleges *(Pädagogische Akademien)* for six semesters, together with teachers for secondary general schools.
As the pre-vocational year is organised in small-scale units, teachers must give instruction in several subjects. As a result, this type of school has a constant and continuous need for in-service training and further education of its teachers.

In-service training and further education are provided by the *Pädagogische Institute.* In 1983, the general and the vocational in-service training and further development institutions for teachers were merged to facilitate the organisation of inter-institutional further training events. To ensure that in-service training and further education of teachers is geared to specific school types, the *Pädagogische Institute* are run in four divisions (general compulsory schools, part-time vocational schools, higher-level secondary general schools, technical and vocational schools). The division heads take turns in the overall direction of these institutes for up to three years. The range of courses offered will depend on the current needs in a given province. Attendance at further training events is voluntary. Courses are held during service time and also during free time.

Industry workshops for teachers are an interesting form of in-service training for teachers in the pre-vocational year. For a fortnight, teachers work on a forty hours' job on a workbench or on the assembly line to become aware of the physical and mental requirements facing apprentices and working staff, and to gain hands-on experience.

5.2.4. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

In 1987, the curriculum for the pre-vocational year reorganised remedial instruction, especially with regard to transition to higher ability groups.

Assistance for children of foreign workers whose mother tongue is not German aims at integrating these children into their classes. German-language remedial courses and additional mother-tongue instruction are offered at the *Hauptschule* and the pre-vocational year, partly during class-time.

In order to ensure equal opportunities and to take a burden from parents having to raise and educate children, the Austrian Parliament in 1972 resolved that textbooks were to be made available to pupils free of charge. These textbooks would then be owned by the pupils. Pupils are now entitled to free text books from the first to the last year of schooling. This campaign could eventually ensure that text books of high educational worth were given not only to pupils in all types of schools, but also to linguistic minorities, to blind or severely sight-impaired children. In an effort to cut costs and to promote the considerate use of books, plans are being discussed to collect a (small) contribution from parents toward the cost of textbooks.

5.2.5. EVALUATION AND SUPERVISION

Since the early 1970s, a legal provision calls for a scientifically based evaluation and results validation to accompany all types of school experiments. So far, this obligation applied to the scientific evaluation of school experiments only. A scientific evaluation of the standard education system (system evaluation) does not exist as of yet. First projects are under way, in particular with regard to the reforms launched to expand school autonomy and the associated school development projects. Following a general trend of decentralisation of decision-making structures in education, the guidance, monitoring and evaluation of school experiment was largely transferred to the local and regional authorities in 1988, with the Federal bodies retaining a consultative function.

New trends in school development are aimed at evaluating not only the subject-related performance of pupils in line with statutory requirements, but also to enhance the capabilities and readiness of school staff (school heads, teachers) to evaluate teaching and educational processes, the social organisation at school and the entire school life, i.e. to strengthen the self-evaluation abilities of schools. Together with the reform for autonomy, auxiliary further education measures will strengthen the readiness and capability of teachers and school heads to evaluate the efficiency of the measures adopted under the school autonomy provisions themselves with appropriate methodologies.

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PORTUGAL

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

For decades Portugal had no general reform of education, and a series of overlapping partial modifications resulted in a disorderly and incoherent situation which called for an urgent overhaul. This lack of coordination and inability to meet current demands was particularly apparent in the light of the new challenges summarised below:

- changes in Portuguese society, in particular the consolidation of the democratic system;
- the economic and social development process which needed to be accelerated;
- the new attitudes of a large majority of Portuguese people, involving a higher degree of participation and greater demands;
- integration into the European Community, requiring the modernisation and adaptation of the structures of social and economic development.

The Comprehensive Law on the Education System of 14 October 1986 (46/86), adopted by the Portuguese Assembly in 1986, laid the foundations for a sweeping reorganisation of the Portuguese education system. This law establishes, in particular:

- education objectives and structures;
- assessment programmes, methods and procedures;
- support services and educational aids;
- human resources;
- the administration and management of the education system and schools.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The law on the basis of the education system sets out the organisational principles which determine the aims of the system, namely:

- to help safeguard national identity and promote respect of the Portuguese culture;
- to stimulate learners' personal development by providing a general education;
- to establish the right to be different, through respect for the individual and for different knowledge and cultures;
- to develop aptitudes for work based on a solid general and specialised education;
- to decentralise, devolve powers and diversify educational structures and activities;
- to correct imbalances in regional and local development;
- to offer second chance education;
- to ensure equal opportunities for both sexes;
- to foster a spirit of democracy and democratic practices, by adopting structures and processes that encourage participation.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

With regard to the structure of compulsory education, the most significant reforms concerned the extension of compulsory schooling and the reorganisation of education levels:

- the duration of compulsory education was raised from six to nine years for pupils entering the system in 1987/88 and subsequently;
- basic education *(ensino básico)*, which coincides with the period of compulsory education, includes three successive stages lasting four, two and three years respectively which, whilst complementing each other, involve a progressively more detailed study of subject areas within a general perspective.

Formerly, pupils of this age attended three different levels of education: primary education, preparatory education and unified general secondary education. The period of compulsory schooling covered the first two levels of education (4 + 2 years).

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION (CENTRAL LEVEL)

The years between 1987 and 1992 were essentially characterised by the setting up of regional services of the Ministry of Education, in order to adapt administration to the new technical, pedagogical and normative requirements resulting from the education reforms. The aim of regionalising administration through the creation of intermediate regional structures was therefore to compensate for the frequent absence of permanent monitoring and lack of comprehensive, systemic solutions. Among the fields covered were pedagogy, teaching and non-teaching staff, educational facilities and social and educational support.

In 1993, the central and regional educational administration underwent further restructuring (Decree Law No 133/93 of 26 April 1993). The main points of this Decree Law were:

- the fundamental role of central-level services in designing, programming and monitoring the system;
- an acknowledgement of the growing importance of regional services as bodies for executing education policy measures;
- the boosting of autonomy for schools.

3.2. MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION DISTRICTS

Decree Law No 172/91 of 10 May 1991 established a new model for the supervision and management of schools which is, for the most part, common to all the various levels of pre-school, *ensino básico* and secondary education and which aims to decentralise education administration and allow schools to be independent in cultural, pedagogical, administrative and financial matters.

This model was implemented on an experimental basis during the 1992/93 school year in 20 schools covering five education districts *(áreas escolares)*.

The principle changes introduced by this legislation were the following:

- the concept of "education district" for pre-school establishments and for schools in the first stage of *ensino básico*, grouped into geographical areas with joint supervisory, administrative and management bodies;

- a clear separation of the supervisory and management functions which were formerly exercised by the same bodies:
    - supervisory functions are given to the school council *(conselho de escola)*, comprised of all those involved in the education community, with seats equally distributed between teaching and non-teaching staff;
    - management functions are exercised by a number of bodies, including a one-person administrative entity *(conselho administrativo)* – the executive director, aided by two deputies – reporting directly to the school council;
- the representation of associations of pupils in *ensino básico* in the pedagogical council *(conselho pedagógico)* and class councils (third stage);
- greater participation of representatives of parents' associations, local authorities and economic and cultural interest groups in the work of school supervisory and management bodies.

3.2.1. TRIALS USING A NEW SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The new model will be tried out progressively, starting in the 1992/93 school year with nine *ensino básico* schools in four education districts. A team has been charged with providing continuous direct help to the administration in developing the new model. This team organises its activities in liaison with regional delegations of the General Inspectorate of Education, on the basis of requests from regional education services.

3.2.2. AUTONOMY FOR SCHOOLS

The Decree Law establishing the cultural, pedagogical, administrative and financial autonomy of schools in the second and third stages of basic education and in secondary education was enacted in 1989. The plan was to implement this project gradually, taking into account a series of already adopted measures and on-going experiments, in particular the fund established for the maintenance and preservation of school property managed by the schools themselves.

Application of the various aspects of this Decree Law began on a trial basis in 40 schools in 1989/90, and the experiment was extended to a further 80 schools in 1990/91. The 1991/92 school year was used to consolidate and prepare for the widespread introduction of school autonomy during the 1992/93 school year (Decree Law No 43/89 of 3 February 1989).

3.3. FINANCING

In Portugal, the state is the primary provider of funding for education (tax revenue and internal and external loans). The funds earmarked for the various levels of education have to be distributed in accordance with strategic development priorities for the education system.

As the main source of funding for the education sector, the Ministry of Education finances public education and the corresponding central and regional services by means of grants. Elsewhere, the Ministry funds private and cooperative education through budgetary allocations. As a result of the devolution of central administrative powers, local authorities have been given certain powers in relation to funding. The regional administrations of the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira finance educational institutions and education services that come under the respective Regional Secretariats of Education using their own resources together with state budget allocations.

Other sources of financing include families who contribute directly towards education through the payment of school fees in secondary and higher education and by buying books and school materials.

Universities have the right to be consulted regarding the definition of the criteria used for establishing the grants allocated to them by the state, especially in relation to investment programmes. The universities draw up and propose the respective budgets.

4. CURRICULUM

4.1. REORGANISING CURRICULA

In accordance with the educational aims laid down in the law on the basis of the education system, legislation was enacted in 1989 (Decree Law No 268/89 of 29 August 1989) defining a new method for organising the curriculum in each of the three stages of basic education and in secondary education, together with directives governing the new curricula.

It was on this basis that the new education schemes were created – by field of study and discipline – to include all curricula for *ensino básico* and secondary education according to a different formula for each of the age groups concerned.

The general structure of the new curricula is as follows:

- during the first stage, a general education curriculum is entrusted to a teacher who may be assisted in specialised fields;
- during the second stage, the curriculum is organised by multidisciplinary fields of study, progressively establishing the system of one teacher per area of study;
- during the third stage, a core curriculum with the possibility of various optional sectors is taught on the basis of one teacher per subject.

The curricula were defined by the government after consultation with the National Council for Education, on the basis of the proposals from the Working Group for the Reorganisation of Curricula. This group was set up as part of the Commission for reforming the Education System, created following a Council of Ministers resolution in December 1985.

4.2. DEVELOPING CURRICULA WHICH CORRESPOND TO THE NEW ORGANISATION OF EDUCATION

Initially, curricular planning was coordinated from June 1988 by the Working Group for the Reorganisation of Curricula. This involved setting up multidisciplinary groups for each stage of education, divided into sub-groups for each sector or subject.

The work of these groups has led to the presentation of proposals for defining objectives to be achieved and the corresponding methodological guidelines for each field and subject. The draft documents resulting from these activities formed the basis of three wide-ranging consultations.

The Ministry's central services were responsible for redrafting the curricula in their final version and for cross-curricular coordination. It is the task of these bodies to disseminate the curricula once they have been approved.

4.3. TRIALS USING THE NEW CURRICULA

The recommended methodology for applying the new curricula included the following phases:

- trial, assessment and redrafting;
- consolidation of the redrafted curricula in parallel with the identification of any methodological problems associated with their widespread introduction;
- the widespread introduction of the curricula during the third year of the trial phase.

The trials were conducted in a representative sample of schools. This included schools in the official education sector and others in the private and co-operative education sector, on the mainland as well as in the autonomous regions. The central and regional departments of the Ministry of Education encouraged the provision of training schemes for teachers who were involved in applying the new curricula.

Teachers in the first stage followed individual training courses. For the second and third stages, subject-based teams were selected and trained to help regional education offices and schools. These teams, comprised of teacher-trainers who support the teachers taking part in the trial, were responsible for liaison between schools in the same region, encouraged the development of teaching materials and carried out training activities.

The central departments of the Ministry of Education (DGEBS and IIE) were given the task of monitoring the implementation of the curricula. The recasting of the curricula, which came under these bodies, was carried out in part by the groups which had originally drawn them up, on the basis of the information gathered during the pilot application phase from among teacher-trainers or supporting teachers, group representatives and teachers from each school taking part in the trial. Furthermore, the views of teachers in *ensino básico* and in secondary and higher education were taken into account.

One of the specific aims of this recasting of the curriculum was to ensure cross-curricular co-ordination between the curricula initially defined. The General Inspectorate of Education also closely monitored the implementation of the curricular reforms and published regular progress reports on the work.

5. TEACHING STAFF

5.1. TEACHERS' CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The conditions of service for nursery teachers and teachers in *ensino básico* and secondary education were established in 1990. They include general provisions relating to the teacher's entire career and replace an ill-assorted miscellany of legislative acts that were neither coherent nor uniform. Conditions of service are now governed by separate legislation (Decree Law No 139-A/90 of 28 April 1990).

5.2. RESTRUCTURING MANAGERIAL POSTS

Since 1988, legislation has reflected a concern to foster career stability for teachers and facilitate the access of holders of the required diplomas to managerial posts.

More recently, the position of education area manager – as provided for in the teachers' conditions of service – was created in 1993 with a view to stabilising managerial staff and making their management more flexible and operational, notably by adapting them to the requirements of the system (Decree Law No 384/93 of 18 November 1993).

5.3. CREATION OF A SINGLE CAREER STRUCTURE

Legislation in 1989 created a single career structure for teachers subdivided into 10 grades, laying down the conditions and grade of entry as well as promotion conditions. In addition to seniority, performance assessment and participation in in-service training are now prerequisites for promotion (Decree Law No 409/89 of 18 November 1989).

5.4. INTRODUCTION OF A TRIAL PERIOD

The teachers' conditions of service introduced a period for assessing a teacher's professional suitability for the post to be filled (probationary period), corresponding to the first working year at entry grade for holders of a professional diploma authorising them to exercise the teaching profession (Decree Law No 139-A/90 of 28 April 1990).

5.5. INITIAL TRAINING

The legal decree relating to the training of nursery teachers and teachers in *ensino básico* and secondary education was published in 1989. It defines their occupational profile for scientific, pedagogical and didactic fields of competence. Here again, great importance is attached to in-service training which is deemed inseparable from initial training.

Initial training for all teachers now takes place at higher education level. In former times, nursery and primary teachers (now the first stage of *ensino básico)* were given intermediate training at post-secondary non-higher education level.

Specific initial teacher training courses must be organised in line with the definition of the corresponding educational groups and qualifications. They must take into account scientific, pedagogical, theoretical and practical aspects of training.

Training must be flexible in order to allow teachers to be retrained and to move from one level of education to another, qualifying teachers from the various levels to teach in the preceding stage as well (Decree Law No 344/89 of 11 October 1989).

5.6. THE IN-SERVICE TRAINING SYSTEM

Since the adoption of teachers' conditions of service, in-service teacher training has been considered as both a right and a duty, which has had a major impact on teachers' professional careers. The process of assessing a teacher's performance is based on the submission of a critical review concerning the activities carried out, accompanied by a certificate of completed in-service training. Credits for completed training are then awarded for promotion purposes.

In-service training can be provided by higher education institutions and by training centres attached to groups of schools or teachers' associations, with teachers being at liberty to choose their own type of training. Such training is free of charge. A competent authority for the entire national territory was created to accredit training centres and their activities, and to monitor and evaluate the system of in-service teacher training. This authority is the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for In-service Training. The government is responsible for setting training priorities (Decree Law No 249/92 of 9 November 1992 and Decree Law No 274/94 of 28 October 1994).

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

and

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

7.1. SUPPORT AND ANCILLARY SERVICES

As laid down in the law on the basis of the education system, support and ancillary services were regulated in January 1990 with the objective of promoting access to school, educational continuity and success at school, in particular with respect to the nine-year period of compulsory schooling.

This law established that compulsory education must be free of charge and set out the practicalities of support services. It applies both to pupils in public education and to those in the private and co-operative sector (Decree Law No 35/90 of 25 January 1990). Support services in the field of food, nutrition, school insurance, financial aid, school supplies and health at school were specified at a later date.

Psychology and guidance services first appeared in 1991. Their aim is to guide pupils throughout their school career, help them identify their interests and aptitudes, intervene should they encounter learning difficulties and encourage the development of their own identity.

As specialised educational support units, the psychology and guidance services have been integrated into the school network and carry out their activities either in educational establishments or in education districts. They work in close collaboration with the services of special education, school welfare, school medicine and health at school (Decree Law No 190/91 of 17 May 1991).

In July 1993, a new regulatory framework for school support measures was established following the application of the new assessment system. This framework defines the procedures and strategies for providing pedagogical support to pupils, the powers and responsibilities of the school and administrative bodies and the means and resources required for a quality education (Decree No 178-A/ME/93 of 30 July 1993).

7.2. THE "EDUCATION FOR ALL" PROGRAMME

With a view to ensuring full compliance with the requirement of nine years of compulsory schooling laid down in Law No 46/86, the Council of Ministers Resolution No 29/91 adopted the programme "Education for All". Its principal objectives are to help implement education reforms by encouraging the social effectiveness of schools and improving the standard of education and teaching, to guard against pupils dropping out of school early and to establish rigorous monitoring of school attendance.

The co-ordination of measures to be developed was entrusted to an inter-ministerial committee which was responsible for evaluating to what degree programme initiatives and projects had been implemented.

Below are some of the projects to be developed as part of the programme:

- social mobilisation aimed at ensuring school attendance for all young people of school age, with the objective of achieving respect for the nine-year period of compulsory schooling by 1994/95 and access to and participation in secondary education on as wide a scale as possible between now and 1999/2000;
- social initiatives, running until the year 2000, to encourage school attendance;
- observation of the internal and external factors of success at school.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

8.1. PUPIL ASSESSMENT

In order to make the assessment system compatible with the new organisation of the curriculum, a new assessment system for pupils in *ensino básico* was adopted to monitor the quality of education and encourage all pupils to achieve success at school (Decree No 96-A/92 of 20 June 1992).

This legislative act is due to come into effect, for each year of schooling, during the school year in which the new curricula are introduced throughout the education system.

The new system combines various types of assessment procedure (formative, summative and specialised) which have to be carried out through the years and stages, taking into account pupils' personal development. The system is innovative not only because of its wide variety of approaches, but also because assessment is formative, systematic and continuous, repeating of the school year has become the exception, and support teaching schemes have been set up for pupils experiencing difficulties.

Decree No 644-A/94 of 15 September 1994 limited the exceptional nature of repeating by stipulating and extending the circumstances which make it necessary (a pupil who is lagging seriously behind in relation to the defined objectives and skills or has a poor school attendance record).

8.2. SYSTEM EVALUATION

System evaluation covers activities carried out nation-wide by the central organisations of the Ministry of Education and the specific mechanisms for monitoring implementation of the reforms.

8.2.1. GENERAL MECHANISMS

Apart from the General Inspectorate of Education, the following organisations carry out system evaluation on a national scale:

- **The Institute for Educational Innovation** (IIE), which is responsible for:
  - designing methods and instruments for evaluating the education system and systems for assessing pupils' attainment levels, especially for the purposes of ascertaining the standard of teaching and learning;
  - monitoring their execution and studying their results;
  - providing scientific and technical support for evaluation to any entities which so request;
  - designing and co-ordinating performance monitoring mechanisms for *ensino básico* schools and secondary education institutions.

  In the field of quality control of teaching and learning, it is planned to carry out comparative studies in *ensino básico* schools and in secondary education establishments in order to measure attainment of the minimum objectives defined within the framework of the national curriculum for each stage of education. These tests may take place at any time during the school year.

  Annual and final evaluations of the experimental application of the curricula, the various programmes and their specific areas (school district, in-service training to develop personal and social skills) are the responsibility of the Institute for Educational Innovation. This organisation also defines the methodology to be applied, develops the required assessment and accreditation tools and drafts reports based on the data gathered (Decree Law No 142/93 of 26 April 1993).

- **Programming and Financial Management Service (DEPGEF).**

  Based on education statistics, the DEPGEF is responsible for promoting studies and surveys and making statistical analyses of the data obtained to serve as the basis for an economic and financial evaluation of the education system (Decree Law No 135/93 of 26 April 1993).

  It is also responsible for carrying out studies to assess school functions and for designing, developing and applying education indicators.

8.2.2. SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

Bodies have been set up to monitor the implementation of curricular reforms and the new model for managing schools. They have specific objectives and well-defined time limits.

8.2.2.1. THE NEW EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The Board for Monitoring Curricular Reform, set up in April 1990, is responsible for monitoring the application of new curricula on the basis of a pedagogical experiment and for putting forward proposals, giving advice and submitting recommendations on the redrafting and suitability of curricula, as well as on the development of teaching materials and pedagogical aids.

The Board was consulted regarding most of the legislation enacted and has carried out analyses, drafted critical reviews and issued recommendations for the studies that were conducted as part of the reform.

8.2.2.2. THE NEW SYSTEM FOR MANAGING SCHOOLS

In compliance with the legislation establishing the system, the Board for Monitoring and Evaluating the New Model was set up. During its first years of operation, the Board is responsible for conducting the respective evaluations by drafting half-yearly assessment reports and any revisions it deems should be made to proposals.

The results of the evaluation will be transmitted to the government in early 1996. Decisions will then be taken regarding any changes to be made to the model created by Decree Law No 172/91 and the manner in which the new model should be extended to all public nursery, *ensino básico* and secondary education establishments.

8.3. INSPECTORATE FOR EDUCATION

Decree Law No 140/93 defines the General Inspectorate of Education as the central service of the Ministry of Education. Its principal tasks are to:

- monitor the pedagogical and technical quality of nursery, *ensino básico* and secondary education and of private and cooperative higher education;
- check the administrative and financial efficiency of all establishments and services forming part of the education system;
- ensure compliance with legal provisions governing the system of enrolment fees and educational support services in public higher education.

At central level, the General Inspectorate of Education exercises its powers via five co-ordination centres:

- the technical and pedagogical inspection centre, responsible mainly for monitoring the pedagogical quality of nursery and out-of-school education, of *ensino básico* and secondary public education; following up the development of the reform in the education system; gathering information and drawing up reports on the results of assessing the performance of teachers in nursery, *ensino básico* and secondary education; and carrying out an overall qualitative evaluation of schools;
- the administrative and financial inspection centre, responsible mainly for controlling the efficient administrative and financial management of public nursery, *ensino básico* and secondary education establishments, gathering information and drafting reports on the performance of non-teaching staff;
- the inspection centre for private and cooperative non-higher education and vocational schools, responsible mainly for controlling pedagogical quality and providing information on the pedagogical, administrative and financial quality of vocational schools;
- the inspection centre for higher education, responsible mainly for controlling the scientific and pedagogical quality of higher education institutions;

- the technical and legal assistance centre, responsible mainly for collecting information, preparing studies and providing legal advice.

At regional level, the powers of the General Inspectorate of Education are exercised by regional delegations covering the same geographical areas as regional education services.

MAIN SOURCES USED

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FINLAND

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

The entire education system in Finland has undergone three major reforms. The most important reforms concerning compulsory schooling *(peruskoulu/grundskola)* are the Compulsory School Act of 1983 and the relevant reform of the curriculum system in 1985 as well as the Act on Financing Education and Culture passed in 1992. The reforms were necessary to unify the legislation, which had undergone several amendments, and to give municipalities more decision-making powers in matters related to teaching and the financing of education.

The reforms in the *peruskoulu/grundskola* resulted from changes that had taken place in the norms and objectives of society in general. These changes were in turn caused by the increasingly high level of education among the Finnish population, a high standard of social security and citizens' demands for more autonomy in decision-making. The Compulsory School Act and the relevant curriculum system were revised for the following reasons.

- The legislation on compulsory schooling partly went back to the time of two parallel systems of compulsory education, before the introduction of the *peruskoulu/grundskola*. In addition, the legislation was fragmented and unsuitable for the development of the all-through compulsory school.
- The upper stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* did not provide all pupils with qualifications sufficient for post-compulsory education. Furthermore, the upper stage did not form a suitable basis for education corresponding to the changing needs of working life.
- The school administration was too centralised, bureaucratic and focused on close monitoring of municipalities and schools.

The financing system for education and culture was revised because the previous system was too centralised, detailed, inflexible and bureaucratic; and did not encourage municipalities to be cost-effective.

These reforms concerned the whole *peruskoulu/grundskola* and the whole country.

The reforms were implemented by the state school administration together with the central organisations of the municipalities and of the teaching staff. The reforms were the subject of a lively public debate which focused especially on the decentralisation of decision-making powers. Before the implementation of the reforms, an experiment with the lesson hour quota system was carried out in the upper stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* in 1982-84. The experiment involved a large sample of schools from all over the country. The Jyväskylä Institute for Educational Research was responsible for carrying out the experiment.

The new legislation on the *peruskoulu/grundskola*, consisting of eight different Acts, came into force on 1 August 1985. Municipalities were allowed to decide independently on the adoption of the new curriculum. Most municipalities adopted the new system gradually, starting from 1 August 1986. The new legislation replaced the Primary School Act of 1957 and the School System Act of 1968 as well as ten other related Acts.

The *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1983 was amended several times in the following years due to increasing demands for the delegation of authority. This trend was speeded up by the so-called free municipalities experiment started in 1989. The experiment gave more autonomy to the participating municipalities and later, after changes to the Municipal Administration Act, also to other municipalities. As a result of the experiment, *peruskoulu/grundskola* administration was incorporated into general municipal administration in 1992.

The reform of the state grant system is based on the Financing of Education and Culture Act which came into force on 1 January 1993. Simultaneously, the 1978 Act on State Grants for *Peruskoulu/grundskola* and Upper Secondary Schools and Public Libraries was abolished.

An evaluation of the reforms carried out between 1984 and 1994 reveals the following points.

- Administrative tasks have been reduced considerably in the National Board of Education, the provincial state offices and the municipal school offices. The numbers of staff in these organisations have been reduced correspondingly.
- At the same time, the volume of administrative tasks in schools has increased.
- Bureaucracy within the administration has been reduced significantly.
- The development of the curriculum and the unification and simplification of the legislation were restarted in the 1990's.
- Due to the economic recession and the liberalisation of the legislation, differences between the educational opportunities available in municipalities have become somewhat more marked, especially in special education.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

The education system in Finland was adapted to the principle of common continuous education by changing the compulsory school system into the single structure system *(peruskoulu/grundskola)* in the years 1972-77. The goals of the system were not changed in the new *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1983, but the structure of education was revised in order to better achieve the goals. Revision of the legislation was necessary, especially because the existence of differentiated courses, which streamed pupils into groups studying different syllabi, often hindered entrance to post-compulsory education where the principle of the single structure was applied.

The primary goals of the reform of the single structure legislation were:

- to unify the existing legislation while taking into consideration the need to revise the legislation and the school system due to changes in society; and
- to develop the school system by revising it with current and foreseeable needs in mind.

2. THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM AND THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. CHANGES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURE

The school administration system in Finland consists of five levels: the Ministry of Education, the National Board of General Education/the National Board of Education, provincial state offices, municipalities and schools. The system currently has too many levels and is thus inflexible. In the period concerned, the number of administrative levels was not reduced. However, in accordance with the general principle of delegation of authority, decision-making powers were gradually transferred to the lower levels of the hierarchy, especially from the government to the municipalities.

The greatest change in the administrative structure took place when the National Boards of General Education and Vocational Education were united in 1991 to form the National Board of Education (the National Board of Education Act, 1991). This act stipulates that the National Board of Education is responsible for developing education, promoting educational outcomes and monitoring the provision of education. Today, the National Board of Education concentrates increasingly on developing the goals, contents and methods of education as well as monitoring and evaluating educational outcomes. Municipal authorities were given duties which previously belonged to provincial state offices. The *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1985 stipulated that teacher selection was to be submitted to the provincial state offices when required, but in 1988 this practice was discontinued. The municipality guidelines may specify that teachers are selected by either the school board or the chief education official of the municipality or by the board of governors of the school.

The 1992 Municipal Administration of Education Act introduced significant changes to the structure of the municipal school administration. Municipalities can decide themselves whether to have the post of a chief education official and whether to have boards of governors in schools. As a result, many municipalities have discontinued the chief education official's post and incorporated the relevant tasks in the duties of a selected headteacher. It has also become common to have one person acting as head of several schools. Municipal school administration, which was uniform under the previous legislation, is now becoming more and more diverse. Within municipalities, duties have been delegated from the municipal school board to the schools and their heads. This has increased the decision-making powers of schools and headteachers and weakened the position of chief education officials and municipal school boards.

The most significant instance of delegation stipulated by the 1983 *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act was the introduction of the "lesson hour quota system" in single structure schools. The system transferred the responsibility of deciding the annual working plans of the schools from the provincial state offices to the municipal school boards. The change was especially important in the upper stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola*, as was the abolition of the "level course system", which previously had streamed pupils into groups studying different syllabi. In practice, schools were allowed to decide independently on the distribution of the teaching resources (lesson hours) within the limits of the quotas.

Before the new legislation, the National Board of General Education took the decisions concerning the *peruskoulu/grundskola* curriculum. The new legislation divides the curriculum so that part of it is decided at the national level and the remainder at the municipal level. However, the proportion of municipal decision-making remains small.

The reforms of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* legislation replaced school councils with boards of governors which were given more decision-making powers than the councils. The municipality guidelines may transfer some of the duties of the municipal school board to the boards of governors or to specified officials (chief education officials and school heads).

The general language teaching plan approved by the Council of State encouraged municipalities to make their language teaching programmes more varied, but municipalities were allowed to take the actual decision themselves.

2.2. CHANGES IN THE FINANCING OF EDUCATION

The reforms of the legislation on financing education and culture aimed at:

- improving educational outcomes and increasing flexibility in the provision of education;
- strengthening the autonomy of municipalities and increasing the decision-making powers and freedom of municipalities and schools;

- emphasising the responsibility of municipalities and schools in managing their own finances;
- reducing the administration of the state grant system and decreasing the volume of administrative tasks at the different levels of the administration;
- unifying and simplifying the retrieval of financial and other information and improving the reliability of the information.

Previously, the state grants allocated to municipalities for the maintenance of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools were based on expenditure actually incurred, which required close annual control of receipts. The new legislation stipulates that the amount of state funding is calculated on a computational basis and that municipalities receive the sum in a single payment. Thus municipalities may decide independently on the use of the funds within the scope of their education budgets. According to the new Financing of Education and Culture Act, the Council of State decides on the total resources allocated to municipalities on the basis of national criteria. The amount of funding depends on, for example, the number of pupils and the financial capacity of the municipality. The Ministry of Education retains the power to decide on the financing of new school buildings.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

Table 1 illustrates the administration of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools before and after the reforms. The most important reform was the changing of school councils into boards of governors. The new boards have more decision-making powers than the councils did in the past. The tasks of the two bodies are the same, however, i.e. to develop education and teaching in the school and to encourage cooperation between the school and the pupils' homes. The board of governors is also responsible for supervising the management of school finances, drawing up a school budget proposal, formulating the rules and regulations of the school and of the pupils' union, protecting legal rights, deciding on disciplinary measures against pupils and exempting eligible pupils from language studies. The municipal council may transfer some of the duties of the municipal school board to the boards of governors. In 1992, the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act was changed so that two other Acts, namely the Municipal Administration of Education Act 1992 and the Municipal Administration Act 1976, are also applied to the administration of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools. As a result, municipalities may decide themselves whether to have boards of governors in schools.

Table 1. Administration of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools

Before 1985	After 1985
Headteacher School council: – parents – teachers – pupils (upper stage)	Headteacher Board of governors: – parents – teachers – pupils (upper stage) – other staff Teachers' committee of the school Pupil union (upper stage) Meeting of other staff

Each *peruskoulu/grundskola* school was also obliged to form a teachers' committee which is responsible for, amongst other things, developing and integrating education and teaching in the school. The committee also draws up proposals concerning the curriculum and the annual working plan of the school as well as the textbooks to be used.

The upper-stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* must have a pupils' union which is responsible for organising recreational activities and looking after the interests of pupils. *Peruskoulu/grundskola* schools must also arrange meetings of the non-teaching staff. The board of governors includes a representative of the non-teaching staff in addition to teachers and pupils. The pupils have two representatives who have the right to speak, but not to vote.

The *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools with at least 12 basic teaching groups have a "rector", and smaller schools have a head. The responsibilities and the authority of "rectors" have increased under the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* School Act of 1983. "Rectors" now have more decision-making powers in financial issues and, in some municipalities, also in the appointment of staff.

4. GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The general structure of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* did not change. It consists of a six-year lower stage and a three-year upper stage. The *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1983 stipulates that municipalities can, by permission of the Ministry of Education, also arrange one year of pre-school education for six-year-olds as well as an additional tenth year for pupils who have already completed compulsory education.

Only 0.5% of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools in Finland are privately owned. The private schools are usually maintained by internationally recognised educational organisations, and only one school is maintained by a religious organisation. Finland thus has a nationally unified compulsory schooling system.

The *peruskoulu/grundskola* school does not have a national final examination. The *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1983 abolished the differentiated courses which streamed pupils into different levels in the upper stage of compulsory education. Thus the *peruskoulu/grundskola* diploma now provides all pupils with equal eligibility for upper secondary education and vocational education based on the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school.

During the period under review, the duration of the school year in the *peruskoulu/grundskola* remained at 190 working days.

During the preparation of the new legislation on education and culture, an effort was made to avoid closing down schools in sparsely populated areas. This goal was not quite achieved, however. After the legislation had been revised and after the effects of the economic recession had started to appear in municipalities, there were more small lower-stage *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools closed down than previously, most of them in 1993. This trend was made possible by the 1993 amendment to the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* School Act, which removed the limits on the greatest distance allowed between the pupil's home and the school. After the Act on Financing Education and Culture came into force, the network of lower-stage *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools in sparsely populated areas has become a little less dense, and the average distance from home to school has increased.

5. CURRICULUM

The curriculum reform, based on the legislation concerning the *peruskoulu/grundskola*, aimed at:

- abandoning the differentiated course system, which streamed pupils in upper-stage *peruskoulu/grundskola* schools into different levels according to their learning abilities;
- providing all pupils with equal eligibility for upper secondary school and for vocational education based on *peruskoulu/grundskola* school;
- revising the procedure used to divide pupils into groups, and introducing the lesson hour quota system;

- defining the boundaries of the national curriculum and the municipal curricula;
- allowing municipalities more latitude in decisions concerning their individual curricula and giving them more responsibility in the development of the compulsory school curriculum.

Table 2 presents the changes in the educational objectives of *peruskoulu/grundskola* school made in the 1985 legislation.

Table 2. The 1985 changes in educational objectives

Before 1985	After 1985
Primary school provided - the necessary basic education - education for moral behaviour and good manners - necessary knowledge and skills	The *peruskoulu/grundskola* school provides - the basic general education necessary to citizens The *peruskoulu/grundskola* school aims at bringing up citizens who are - balanced - physically fit - responsible - independent - creative - cooperative - peaceloving The *peruskoulu/grundskola* school must educate pupils in - moral behaviour and good manners - necessary knowledge and skills

The new objectives include the objectives of primary school as well as other, more detailed objectives.

Before the 1985 reforms, the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school curriculum was laid out strictly at the national level, and municipalities were not allowed to influence its contents. In addition, the curriculum was too extensive and detailed. In order to ensure uniformity at the national level as well as equality and comparability at the regional level, the curricular guidelines issued in 1985 were still intended to form the major part of the municipal curricula. The National Board of Education decided on the national syllabi, and municipalities were only allowed to make adjustments to them. Municipalities could also make some additions according to local needs and issue additional instructions concerning educational arrangements.

The structure of the 1985 curriculum was influenced by two reforms. A "lesson hour quota system" was introduced to the entire *peruskoulu/grundskola* school, defining the number of lesson hours that schools had available for teaching. Within the scope of the quotas, schools had the right to adjust their teaching according to the pupils' needs. At the same time, the differentiated courses were abandoned in the upper stage of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school. After this, differences between pupils were compensated for by introducing more individualised teaching. The contents of the curriculum were also influenced by the general language teaching plan laid out by the Council of State, which included among others the objective of making language teaching programmes more diversified. The curriculum system reform is presented in Table 3.

An attempt was made to integrate the curriculum by gathering similar or related material taught in different subjects into new subject entities. In addition, the first years of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* were developed towards a holistic concept of education.

There were no significant changes in the distribution of lesson hours during the period under review. However, the *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act of 1983 included a new subject, ethics, which is taught to pupils not belonging to any religious denomination. The National Board of General Education carried out a study on learning strategies and on a new concept of knowledge. The study, conducted in the beginning of the 1990's influenced the next curricular guidelines laid down in 1994.

The teaching methods used in compulsory education did not change remarkably, even though the reforms required teaching to become more individualised and more attention to be given to pupils with special needs. Previously, textbooks and other study materials used in *peruskoulu/grundskola* school had to be approved by the National Board of General Education. This practice was abandoned in 1992.

Table 3. The 1985 curriculum system

	Before 1985	**After 1985**
COUNCIL OF STATE	- issued a recommendation on the distribution of lesson hours[1]	- decided on the distribution of lesson hours and the general principles behind it - decided on the general language teaching plan
NATIONAL BOARD OF GENERAL EDUCATION	- approved the general national curriculum.	- issued the basic principles, guidelines and syllabi for the national curriculum
PROVINCIAL STATE OFFICE	- approved the curriculum and the annual working plan	- approved the curriculum[2] - drew up the language teaching programme for the province
MUNICIPALITY	- drew up the curriculum conforming to the general national curriculum of the National Board of General Education	- drew up the curriculum drew up the language teaching programme for the municipality

The *peruskoulu/grundskola* does not have a compulsory national examination for assessing school achievement at any stage. The aim of the 1985 curriculum was to develop educational content and activities in accordance with the new, more precise objectives. In pupil assessment, this resulted in a change from relative to objective-based assessment.

After the abolition of differentiated courses, all pupils who complete *peruskoulu/grundskola* obtain general eligibility for further studies in upper secondary school and in vocational education based on the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school.

6. TEACHING STAFF

The qualifications required of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school teachers and the duration of teacher training have remained the same during the last decade.

Supplementary training of post-holding teachers was previously arranged by municipalities and by provincial state offices. The National Board of General Education issued instructions on the training and allocated the necessary resources. The provincial state offices used the services of special provincial consultants to provide the training. The introduction of the new legislation and curriculum in 1985 required an extensive supplementary training programme. At the beginning of the 1990's, the responsibility for arranging and financing the supplementary training of teachers was transferred entirely to the municipalities. Simultaneously, the part-time jobs of provincial consultants were discontinued.

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[1] In practice, the recommended quotas were adopted as such.

[2] An amendment to the Comprehensive School Act made in 1988 abolished this practice.

The selection of teachers became the responsibility of the municipalities in 1988. Within municipalities, the selection is made by the board of governors of the school or by the chief education official or the school board of the municipality.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

From the viewpoint of equal educational opportunities, the most important aspect of the 1983 *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act was the transfer of special schools, intended for pupils with moderate developmental disabilities, from the social services administration to the school administration. The social services administration was still responsible for the education of severely mentally retarded children.

Another measure aimed at the same goal was that pupils can no longer be exempted from compulsory education; all children must participate regardless of their level of development. The municipality is responsible for organising school education for all pupils living in the municipality.

The additional tenth year of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* is intended to support those pupils who have difficulty entering studies following compulsory education.

Compulsory education is also provided in hospitals. The municipality where the hospital is located must, under the 1983 *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* Act, arrange for the education of long-term patients who are of school age. Previously, some hospitals had private compulsory schools, but they were not entitled to state grants.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

The evaluation and monitoring of the outcomes and functioning of compulsory schooling were previously the responsibility of the National Board of General Education and the provincial state offices subordinate to it. In addition, the Jyväskylä Institute for Educational Research carried out evaluations of educational outcomes at the national level. The inspection of schools was carried out in accordance with the 1968 Act on the National Board of General Education and the Regional Administration subordinate to It. In practice, the provincial state offices inspected schools as necessary and provided the National Board of General Education with annual reports.

With the introduction of the *peruskoulu/grundskola* school system, the emphasis in school inspections shifted more towards guidance. This trend was further enhanced by the guidance given by provincial consultants during their visits to schools together with the inspectors.

The 1983 *Peruskoulu/Grundskola* School Act did not contain any mention of school inspections, but the monitoring and evaluation of teaching was continued according to the instructions of the National Board of General Education. The provincial state offices gave their last reports in 1992. After this, the evaluation of compulsory education became entirely the responsibility of the National Board of Education.

MAIN SOURCES USED

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SWEDEN

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

During the 1990s, major parts of the Swedish education system have been reformed, including compulsory education *(grundskola)*.

The alterations to the legislative framework for the compulsory school system that have taken effect in recent years have involved fundamental changes in the control and organisation of the schools, as well as in the conditions under which municipalities and individual schools are able to operate. In December 1993, Parliament adopted legislation laying down new curricular guidelines for the whole school system, geared to the new goal and result-related governing system for schools. As further described below, these guidelines have led to extensive changes, inter alia, in the curriculum, syllabi and timetables as well as in the marking system in the *grundskola*.

With the onset of the 1990s and the new steering system, increasing emphasis was put on the control aspect. The situation at the beginning of the 1990s is new in relation to what applied during the earlier part of the 20th century. Comprehensive changes were being implemented in both the regulatory system and in the division of responsibility between elected officials and professionals, and between central and local levels. In all probability the shrinking economy was a major reason for the growing demands for efficiency, but freedom of choice and increased opportunities for pupils and their parents to choose education both within and between schools specialising in different areas were additional factors.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

When the state regulation of the terms of employment of teachers and headteachers was abolished in 1991, this contributed to the municipalities having overall responsibility for running schools. This reform is described in part 1.

The reform of the *grundskola* of 1993 and 1994 (curriculum and syllabi were issued in spring 1994) affected the whole compulsory school system. The following text, parts 2 to 4, will be dealing in more detail with the content of the reform in the specific areas which have been altered by the reform, i.e. areas of organisation and structure, curriculum, marking system, etc.

The reforms of teacher training as well as its historical development are presented in part 5. Reforms which have taken place in the area of special education are described in part 6.

The reforms have also led to changes in the evaluation and supervision of the *grundskola* which are presented in part 7.

1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1. REFORMS IN THE DECISION-MAKING LEVELS

Between 1980 and 1990 several reforms increased the local authorities' power over their own activities.

The state responsibility for teachers' salaries and conditions of employment was one of the traditional ways for the state to influence the school system. It had, however been criticised because of its inefficiency and lack of distinctness. The main aim of the changes was to make the division of responsibility more distinct and to increase efficiency. In 1991, the state regulation of the municipal appointment of teachers and headteachers was abolished, which contributed to the municipalities having overall responsibility for running the school.

Most of the detailed state regulations were abolished and were replaced by a new curriculum and Education Act. The state grants based on teachers' salaries were replaced by a school sector grant that could be used freely.

Today the local authorities may themselves distribute their state grants, as long as they follow the state laws and regulations to ensure that a number of basic services are provided. In addition, the municipalities have the right to levy income taxes and also charge fees for various services. In principle education at compulsory and upper secondary level is free of charge.

The increased responsibility and freedom of the municipalities has meant that they together with the schools decide over the school organisation and ways of working. The main principle is that the state sets out the national goals and guidelines and evaluates the results, while the municipalities organize and run the schools.

2. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

2.1. REFORMS IN THE FUNCTIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNING BODIES OF SCHOOLS

In 1988, a Government bill proposed a goal- and result oriented governing system for the schools. The decentralisation has resulted in a system where Government and Parliament lay down the legal framework in which the local authorities can operate. The local authorities (county councils and municipalities) have thus great autonomy in administrating the education system.

Each municipal council and county council appoints one or more committees which have the responsibility for ensuring that educational activities are conducted in compliance with state regulations and guidelines and that the external conditions of education are as appropriate and favourable as possible. The committee or committees responsible for schools are obliged to ensure that inter alia schools: are built and sufficient facilities are provided; that the activities of schools in the municipality are coordinated; that qualified teaching and non-teaching staff are hired and receive in-service training; that municipal funds are allocated for school activities; that it is made possible to achieve the objectives laid down in the curricula and that the general guidelines are complied with. In practice, it is the responsibility of the local committees to ensure that Swedish schools uphold equivalent standards all over the country. Each municipality is required to set out the general objectives for its schools in a school plan, adopted by the municipal council. The municipality is obliged to monitor and evaluate the school plan and to provide the State with reports on facts and circumstances of relevance for the evaluation of educational activities. In addition, every school has to devise a work plan, based on the curriculum and local priorities. The work plan also has to be monitored and evaluated.

In 1991, the Board of Education and the county boards of education were wound up. In their place new smaller authorities with limited tasks were set up - the National Agency for Education and the Agency for Special Education (for pupils with impaired hearing/vision and physical disabilities).

2.2. REFORMS IN THE POSITION OF THE HEADTEACHER

The headteacher functions both as pedagogical leader and head of staff. In the new curriculum for the *grundskola* the headteacher is given overall responsibility for ensuring that the activity of the school as a whole is focused on attaining the national goals. The headteacher in the reformed compulsory school shall, among other things, organise the school's working environment, co-ordinate the teaching in different subjects, as well as having responsibility for adjusting the allocation of resources and for remedial measures.

In 1992, Parliament decided on a new national foundation training programme for headteachers (one year's duration). This programme has been based on the new principles of school management.

3. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.1. REFORMS IN THE AGE AT WHICH COMPULSORY EDUCATION STARTS AND ENDS

In 1991, children were given the right to begin school at the age of 6, if their parents so wished and the municipality had the capacity to provide this opportunity. The opportunity for all children to start from the age of 6 will be provided for all children as of the school year 1997/98. In 1994, 7.5% of the pupils starting school that year were 6 years old or younger.

3.2. REFORMS IN DIVISION INTO STAGES, CYCLES, LEVELS

Since the nine-year compulsory school *(grundskola)* was introduced in 1962, it has been divided into three levels, junior, intermediate and senior. This division will be abolished as of 1 July 1995 in conjunction with the introduction of a new curriculum in the compulsory school.

3.3. REFORMS IN DEGREE OF UNIFORMITY WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION – PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In 1992/93 new conditions for private (independent) compulsory schools were introduced. There are still, however, relatively few independent compulsory schools in Sweden. In 1995, about 2% of pupils went to an independent school.

The National Agency for Education examines and approves independent schools. The condition for approval is that the education provided by the school shall provide knowledge and skills essentially corresponding in terms of their nature and level to the knowledge and skills that the compulsory school provides. The school should also, in more general terms, work for the general goals of the compulsory school.

Schools that have been approved receive a grant from the home municipality of the pupil. The municipalities are obliged to pay the independent school 75% of the average cost per pupil in a municipal compulsory school. The Government has stated that there will be a reduction in the level payable in the future.

3.4. REFORMS IN ALLOCATION OF PUPILS TO SCHOOLS AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Since 1992, parents of children going through compulsory schooling have had the right to choose, within reasonable economic and organisational restrictions, which school their children attend. Parents and pupils have the freedom to choose between different municipal schools or an approved independent school. The pupil's home municipality is obliged to pay for the pupil's schooling even though the pupil chooses to attend a school in another municipality, or an independent school approved for providing compulsory schooling. On the other hand, the municipality is not obliged to pay school transport for pupils, if parents choose a school that is further away from the pupil's home.

The right to choose a school does not guarantee that there will be places available in the school that is chosen. The school may be completely full. There are also several other restrictions:

- Pupils living closest to a school have priority there.
- Choices made by pupils and parents must not create major economic or organisational problems for the municipality.

4. CURRICULUM

In Sweden the *grundskola* covers both primary and lower secondary education. The three last years in compulsory school, when the pupils are between the ages of 13 and 16, are classified as lower secondary education.

The new curriculum, syllabus and timetable for the *grundskola* will take effect in the 1995/96 school year for years 1 to 7 of compulsory school. Pupils in the 7th to 9th years will be enabled to finish school under the present system, but the reform will be fully implemented as from the 1997/98 school year.

The curriculum sets out the basic values of the school and its tasks and it provides objectives and guidelines for the school. In the new curriculum, emphasis will be placed on the conveyance of knowledge, norms and values as the primary objectives of the school. The objectives of education, to be pursued through teaching, are expressed as the aims of education; and the objectives which all pupils must be given a chance of achieving, as the educational requirements. The objectives are formulated in such a way that their achievement can be evaluated.

The new national syllabus for each subject states the objectives which are to be achieved by the end of the fifth and ninth years of school. The syllabi also indicate the aims of education as well as the purpose, structure and character of each subject, including each individual subject within natural science and social science. Teachers are thus given great freedom in planning their teaching and in choosing their working methods and subject matter.

In order to ensure equivalent standards throughout the country, a timetable has been laid down by Parliament. It is attached to the Education Act as from 1 July 1995. It indicates a minimum guaranteed teacher or supervisor-led instruction time in units of 60 minutes, divided between different subjects and groups of subjects. The local educational authorities are free to decide on a more extensive timetable. The timetable also provides increased scope for individual optional subjects for closer study of one or more subjects. Teachers, within the framework of the timetable, will themselves decide the allocation of teaching time between different years. The only restriction will be that imposed by the syllabus targets at the end of the fifth and ninth years. In the new timetable, more time is allotted to courses in second foreign languages. Inter alia, Spanish is introduced as an alternative to German and French among the optional subjects that each municipality is obliged to offer. Local or individual options may also include a third foreign language.

4.1. TIMETABLE FOR CURRICULUM

(Stipulates the teaching hours for subjects or groups of subjects over the 9 years of compulsory school)

Subject	**Hours from 1 July 1995 Min. hours**
Art education	230
Domestic Science	118
Physical and health education	460
Music	230
Crafts	282
Swedish	1490
English	480
Mathematics	900
Geography History Religion Social sciences	885
Biology Physics Chemistry Technology	800
Foreign language	320
Pupil's choice	470
Total	6665
Whereof choice of school (locally decided)	410

4.2. REFORMS IN THE CRITERIA USED IN ASSESSING AND PROMOTING PUPILS AND THE EXISTENCE OF EXTERNAL NATIONAL PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

The new marking system is goal and achievement-related instead of relative. It will be geared to special achievement criteria which are to be devised in conjunction with the syllabi so as to make it clear to teachers and pupils alike which achievements are necessary for the award of a certain mark. Final awards of nationwide validity are to be awarded in the eighth year. Final awards will be on a three-point scale: Pass, Pass with Merit and Pass with Distinction.

Comparability will be achieved by means of national tests. Diagnostic tests in reading, writing and arithmetic should be administered in all municipal schools at the end of the second year. Subject tests in Swedish, English and mathematics are produced nationally to be used at the end of the fifth and ninth years. Only the tests at the ninth year are obligatory. Swedish tests are also to be administered at independent schools.

5. TEACHING STAFF

5.1. REFORMS IN INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

In 1977, teacher training was brought into the higher education system. In the Autumn of 1988 after a decision by Parliament, a new teacher training programme was introduced for the *grundskola*. This replaced the earlier teaching programmes for class teachers in the lower and intermediate levels of the *grundskola* (years 1-6) as well as the subject programmes for the upper levels (years 7-9). An important principle in changing the training for teachers of the *grundskola* was that the compulsory school was to be regarded as a coherent unit. This led to teacher training being directed towards the compulsory school without there being any direct connection with the upper secondary school. Teacher training for the compulsory school came to be organised within an education programme with the aim of creating a more integrated culture for teachers in the compulsory school.

A new teacher training program was established as of 1992/93 for the higher age groups in the *grundskola* making it possible for students who have studied certain subjects to enter teacher training at a later stage of their studies. At that time, a supplementary programme was also introduced for *grundskola* teaching that aimed at the training of teachers in basic adult education.

The 1993 higher education reform means that there is a single compulsory school teaching diploma with different specialisation options allowing course requirements to be fulfilled in a number of different ways.

Compulsory school teacher training is now provided at a total of 16 universities and university colleges. There are two different options for the compulsory school teacher training programme. The first concerns years 1-7 in the *grundskola* and covers 140 points (3.5 years of studies). The second concerns years 4-9 and usually covers 180 points (4.5 years of studies).

In the compulsory school training programme aimed at teaching in years 1-7, there are two special options available – Swedish and subjects with a social study orientation, and mathematics and science subjects. Teachers are also being trained to be able to teach in all the compulsory subjects as set out in the curriculum for years 1-3, and in a number of other subjects up to the 7th year. The programme contains courses in all these subjects for all students.

There are two ways of obtaining a diploma for teaching years 4-9. The first alternative consists of subject studies for a total of 140-180 points (3.5 to 4.5 years of studies), the latter being the more common. The second way of obtaining a teaching diploma for the later years of the *grundskola* was introduced in 1992/93, and required a total of at least 180 points (4.5 years of studies). The main subject requires at least 60 points in subject studies and in the other teaching subject(s) a minimum of 40 points. When art or music is involved, a minimum of 80 points is required in these subjects.

5.2. REFORMS IN IN-SERVICE TRAINING

In the new goal and result-orientated system, in-service training of school staff is an important instrument for attaining equivalent and high-quality teaching standards throughout the school system. All in-service training should aim at improving the achievement of national aims as well as developing school activities. To this end in-service training should increase the knowledge, skills and understanding of all school staff. These aims have been emphasised by Parliament and the Government in a number of bills and resolutions since 1989.

In Autumn 1990, Parliament decided on a new division of responsibility between the state and the municipality. Today the guiding principle for the division of responsibility is that the running of in-service training is a local responsibility, whilst it is a state responsibility, as well as a local responsibility, to follow-up and evaluate local activities.

5.3. REFORMS IN EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

As already mentioned, prior to 1 January 1991, teachers in the *grundskola* were employed by the municipalities. However, it was the state that negotiated with the teachers'unions on salaries and working conditions. The responsibility of employers for teaching staff was not clearly assigned to either state or municipality, but divided between them.

The question concerning dual responsibility, or more precisely the question of a transition towards a situation where the municipality has the overall responsibility as employer has been discussed over a lengthy period. From the point of view of the municipalities, amongst others, dual employer responsibility was a clear obstacle for the municipalities when implementing an integrated personnel policy and meant that neither the state nor municipalities took overall responsibility for the school and its activities. The different teacher associations, however, regarded state regulation as providing a guarantee that schools would be equivalent in different parts of the country. As a result of this question being the subject of a number of public investigations over decades, a proposal was put forward in 1989 that state regulation of teaching appointment should be abolished so that the municipalities would have overall responsibility for the school.

The phasing out of state regulated appointments for teachers and headteachers which took place thereafter meant that the municipalities assumed complete responsibility as employers for teachers and headteachers. From 1 January 1991, teachers similar to pre-school teachers have been employees of the municipalities. The municipalities thus have responsibility for ensuring that suitably qualified competent teachers are employed. It is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities that negotiates with the teaching unions over salaries and working conditions.

The new curricula which emphasise the role of the teacher as a mentor for pupils, together with the input from other areas, has stimulated development towards teamwork and increased co-operation within the school.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

6.1. REFORMS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Education Act, from 1985, applies to the entire state education system, including compulsory schools *(grundskola)*, upper secondary schools, schools for those with impaired hearing/vision and physical disabilities, special schools (compulsory schools for the mentally retarded), special upper secondary schools (non-compulsory schools for the mentally retarded), adult education and adult education for the mentally handicapped. The Education Act is supplemented by special ordinances issued by the Government for the various types of school such as the regulations on schools for those with disabilities and special upper secondary schools.

On 1 December 1985, responsibility for the compulsory schools for the mentally retarded (special schools) was transferred from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science. Since 1 July 1986, the Education Act has included provisions relating to special schools.

In the Spring of 1992, Parliament decided that responsibility for special schools for the mentally handicapped should be transferred from county councils to local authorities. This will be a gradual process to be completed by the end of 1995. By Autumn 1993, eight of the country's 24 county councils had transferred responsibility for special schools to municipalities in their area.

From 1 July 1995, a new curriculum applies to the entire compulsory education system and since 1 July 1994, a new curriculum has applied to the non-compulsory schools. The new curricula have been laid down by the Government. The curricula are supplemented by separate timetables and syllabi for the various types of school and by programme goals for the special upper secondary schools.

For deaf pupils and pupils with hearing impairments in the special schools, the National Agency for Education has drawn up syllabi for second and third foreign languages, English, movement and drama, Swedish and sign language. For other subjects in the special school, the syllabi for compulsory schools as laid down by the Government apply. The National Agency for Education has also drawn up syllabi for the schools for the mentally handicapped.

Compulsory schools for the mentally handicapped are divided into a compulsory school for the mentally handicapped and 'training' schools. The former are attended by pupils considered capable of learning to read and write and with the aid of these skills to acquire further knowledge. The latter are designed for those who are unable to follow the lessons in the compulsory school for the mentally handicapped. The special upper secondary schools offer vocational education on national and specially designed programmes or courses of study on individual programmes which may involve vocational or occupational training.

Pupils in compulsory schools for the mentally handicapped have, in principle, the same right to choose their school as pupils in the mainstream education system. There are both municipal and independent special schools for the mentally retarded. An approved independent school has to be given subsidies from the pupil's home municipality.

Parliament has decided that mentally handicapped children should not be accepted in the compulsory school for the mentally handicapped without the permission of their guardian or parents over a trial period of four years. The purpose of this trial period is to evaluate whether the mentally retarded pupils may go to an ordinary compulsory school instead of a special school for the mentally retarded.

7. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

7.1. REFORMS IN THE EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM: EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS AND TEACHING STAFF

The reforms in the early 1990s and the change towards a goal and result-oriented system has created a new situation for evaluation. Rationality and usefulness were given prominence with the emphasis being on individual demands and opportunities.

With the new management system, evaluation at the school level is a responsibility of the individual school. From this it follows that there are great variations between how different schools organise and carry out their evaluations.

The major part of the school evaluation takes place locally in individual municipalities and schools. Each school organiser, in accordance with the Education Act, has to draw up a plan for school activity, a school plan, and each school has to have a working plan for its activity. Both school plans and working plans must be regularly evaluated.

The division of responsibility in the management system means that the municipalities themselves are responsible for the organisation and implementation of the evaluation. From this it follows that there will be variations in how the evaluation is carried out. Certain municipalities work with, for example, an inspection system, while others do not.

A principal task for the state authority in the school area, the National Agency for Education, is to follow up and evaluate the school. Each year Statistics Sweden collects a large quantity of data about the school which is processed by the National Agency for Education. Every third year, the National Agency for Education submits an overall assessment of the development and change in Swedish schools. The basis for the descriptions is the information collected by the Agency from different municipalities.

MAIN SOURCES USED

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UNITED KINGDOM (ENGLAND AND WALES)

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

This chapter describes the main policy reforms relating to the period of compulsory education (age 5 to 16 years) in England and Wales.

The 1980s represented a period of unprecedented activity on almost all educational fronts, except pre-school and adult education. This activity covered what is taught and to whom; when and how pupil learning is assessed; how teachers are selected, trained, deployed, paid and appraised; how schools are structured and funded; who governs schools and to whom and how governors are held to account. The Government introduced a series of programmes and new examinations and also concerned itself with vocational training for the unemployed, youth training programmes, the accreditation of education and training and the reform of higher education.

The Government's objectives for its reforms were to raise standards, to increase parental choice, to secure value for money in education and to increase accountability.

The reforms significantly changed the relationship between the Ministry of Education, the Local Education Authorities (LEAs), the teachers and the churches and other voluntary bodies providing education, with respect to the control of the structure, content, staffing, financing and evaluation of education which had been laid down by the Education Act 1944. The balance of power was gradually transferred from the LEAs to the Secretary of State for Education, on the one hand, and to the governing bodies of schools on the other.

The Government adopted the business board of directors as the model for school management. Thus, governing bodies now comprise representatives of the 'shareholders' (who fund the service through taxation and local rates and charges), consumers (parents, employers) and providers (LEA, teachers).

The Government introduced Local Management of Schools (LMS) to improve the quality of teaching and learning by enabling the governing bodies and headteachers to make more effective use of the resources available to them and by allowing them to be more responsive to the needs and wishes of parents, pupils, the local community and employers.

A National Curriculum was introduced, with a programme of regular assessment of pupils' performance in relation to defined achievement targets.

Teachers' salaries were, for the first time, formally linked to their conditions of employment, which included a detailed specification of their responsibilities. A system of teacher appraisal was introduced to enable governors to monitor and enhance teachers' performance. The Teacher Training Agency was set up to advise the Secretary of State on the supply and training of teachers and to fund and oversee provision.

Provision is made to assess and meet the special educational needs of children with physical, emotional, psychological and social disadvantages. Special English language and integration assistance is given to those who have recently arrived in the country.

Although the extensive support services offered by LEAs and others have not been formally reduced, the LMS legislation enabled school governors to choose whether they would purchase support services from the LEA or from alternative suppliers.

The Government has introduced legislation which requires the performance of pupils, of teachers and of schools to be regularly assessed and for the results to be made public. In line with its general promise that progressively more power would be given to the consumers, the Government issued the Parents' Charter, which encouraged parents to be in active partnership with the school and further clarified parents' specific rights (see GB SI 1981/638 and GB DES 1991b). Governing bodies are annually held accountable for the way in which the school meets the needs and wishes of parents, pupils, the local community and employers.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

Education legislation for England and Wales seeks to provide free full-time education for all children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) in accordance with their needs. The basic principle underlying compulsory education is that it should provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs which he or she may have.

The Education Reform Act 1988 defined a balanced and broadly based curriculum as one which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
- prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

It also introduced the concept of Key Stages to mark the periods of learning which culminate in statutory assessment at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 years.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Responsibility for the education system in England and Wales is shared between central government, LEAs, churches and other voluntary bodies, individual institutions and the teaching profession. Central government has powers and responsibility for the total provision of the education service, for determining national policies and for planning the direction of the system as a whole. LEAs, school governing bodies and other education institutions implement and administer the policies and also have statutory powers.

Since 1984, there have been major changes in the responsibilities of, and the relationships between, the education partners. The former Department of Education and Science has been redesignated (firstly as the Department for Education and most recently, as the Department for Education and Employment). Specific responsibilities have been delegated in England to other, non-ministerial Government Departments (such as the Office for Standards in Education), or to non-departmental bodies (such as the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, the Funding Agency for Schools, the Teacher Training Agency, and to corresponding bodies in Wales).

Successive legislation has sought to empower parents, teachers and industrialists acting through the governing body, at the expense of the traditional providers, the LEAs.

Each Local Authority receives an annual grant from central government to provide public services (e.g. education, social services, housing etc.) in accordance with the Government's

Standard Spending Assessment. Subject to their statutory obligations, local authorities are free to determine their educational and social priorities. Central government exhorted LEAs to remove surplus places by closure or amalgamation of schools and to make efficiency savings and reallocate resources to central government's policy priorities. Where exhortation failed, the Government implemented rate capping legislation and preferential targets for low spending authorities intended to bring about a more equitable distribution of expenditure on schools between LEAs (GB DES 1985). Another approach was through the Audit Commission's advice to local authorities on the effective provision of public services and the cost-effective management of education (Audit Commission 1986, 1988, 1988a). The Government considered that there was widespread support for a new funding mechanism and for more systematic and purposeful planning of in-service teacher education (GB DES 1985).

The Education Act 1993 established the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS) which is responsible for assessing and administering the grants payable to self-governing grant-maintained schools in England (Section 3.1). (In Wales, the responsibility for grant-maintained schools lies with the Welsh Office.) The FAS takes on joint responsibility with the LEA for the provision and management of school places when more than 10% of pupils in the primary or secondary phase are in grant-maintained schools. When the proportion of pupils in grant-maintained schools reaches 75 per cent, the FAS assumes total responsibility. Grant-maintained schools are funded at the same level as the LEA-maintained schools in their LEA. However, a Common Funding Formula for all grant-maintained schools is being developed and is currently being piloted in a small number of schools.

Additional grants are made available to LEAs for education programmes or to make provision for pupils, or areas, with particular needs, for example, Section 11 funding for children from ethnic minorities and Urban Aid Grants (see Section 6). The Education Act 1984 expanded this focused support by enabling the then Department of Education and Science to set aside funding for subsidising approved LEA activities. The Government annually specifies the level of support which will be available under the Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) scheme for each eligible activity. LEAs are required to meet at least 30% of the expenditure. Grant-maintained schools may apply direct for support under the GEST scheme.

In the past, maintained schools have received voluntary contributions from parents and others or raised income at events organised by the Parent-Teacher Association. Although it remains illegal for maintained schools and City Technology Colleges (see Section 3.1) to require parents to make a payment for fees, the Education Reform Act 1988 introduced the right for schools to charge for certain extra-curricular activities. This set the framework for schools to offer a range of priced 'services' to their pupils.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Falling pupil numbers and rationalisation of school places led to a reduction in the **number** of schools during the 1980s, but Conservative governments have attempted to increase parental choice between different school **types**. In 1979, the majority of secondary schools were comprehensive, that is, they admitted pupils without reference to academic ability. Government provisions and targeted funding have led to the creation of more schools which admit at least some of their pupils according to their academic ability or special aptitude in technology or modern foreign languages (GB DES 1993).

The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced two new types of school which are outside the control of the LEAs. Self-governing grant-maintained schools receive their funding from central government – through the Funding Agency for Schools in England or the Welsh Office in Wales – and are managed by their governing bodies without reference to the LEA. Grant – maintained status is awarded to a school by the Secretary of State at the request of a majority of parents, and provided that the school meets the necessary criteria. City Technology Colleges (CTCs) are independent schools, established by private sponsors, but which receive some capital and all current expenditure from central government. CTCs cater for pupils aged 11 to 18 of different abilities, drawn wholly or mainly from the area around the school. Pupils are admitted on the basis of technical aptitude and a commitment to remain at school until the age of 18. Unlike other independent schools, CTCs may not charge tuition fees. CTCs were established to help overcome a national shortage of suitably-qualified scientists and technicians, to provide special opportunities for pupils in inner city areas and to make schools more responsive to employers' needs.

The Government is committed to increasing parental choice between schools. The Education Act 1980 gave parents the right to express a preference for a particular school for their children and the governing body of each school must publish admission criteria which will come into operation when demand exceeds the number of places available. The Education Reform Act 1988 obliges schools to admit pupils to the limit of their physical capacity, defined in terms of standard numbers for admission. This policy of 'open enrolment' was based on the assumption that matching supply to demand through competition is the most efficient means of organisation. As a result, pupil places and the viability of schools will be determined by market forces rather than managed by LEAs.

3.2. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL

The Education Act 1980 required all schools to have a separate governing body and made provision for the election of parent and teacher governors. The Education (No 2) Act 1986 increased the proportion of parent governors and introduced a category of 'community governors'. It also formally excluded pupils from membership of the governing body and extended the governors' period of service from two to four years, to allow for continuity. The governing body may co-opt individuals from the local or business community to complement the specialist expertise of elected members.

3.2.1. RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNORS

NOTE: References in this section to consultation with LEAs do not apply in the case of grant-maintained schools.

Legislation since 1984 has given school governing bodies responsibility for:

- the internal management of the school, pupil discipline and suspensions and, subject to the approval of the LEA, the policy relating to pupil admissions and to the use of school premises outside school hours;
- establishing a policy on sex education and, with the LEA and the headteacher, securing a balanced treatment of political matters (GB DES 1987);
- ensuring, with the LEA and the headteacher, that the curriculum for the school satisfies the legal requirements;
- managing and accounting for the expenditure of the school's delegated budget in pursuance of the school's responsibilities and objectives;
- determining the number of teaching and non-teaching staff employed in the school and the salaries payable, the recruitment, development, appraisal and, if appropriate, disciplinary action leading to the dismissal of, staff, although it is still the LEA which, on the governors' recommendation, formally appoints and dismisses teaching and non-teaching staff;

- providing an annual report to parents on the work of the school, on pupil performance and on the expenditure of the school's delegated budget and of any monies raised from alternative sources; and holding an annual meeting for parents at which the report and any other relevant matters raised by parents can be discussed.

3.2.2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADTEACHERS

The headteacher is responsible for the internal management and discipline of the school, as defined in the Education (No 2) Act 1986 and the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1987. The 1986 Act abolished corporal punishment in schools and laid down the headteacher's responsibilities with respect to the curriculum and to discipline. The 1987 Act and subsequent Orders provided a more wide-ranging description including the headteachers' relations with other teachers, parents and outside bodies. The Government has supported the in-service training of headteachers to enable them to fulfil their new responsibilities, specifically through funding under the Grants for Education Support and Training scheme.

3.3. FINANCING

3.3.1. LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced Local Management of Schools (LMS), which was phased in between 1989 and 1994. Under LMS, responsibility for the management of all primary and secondary schools and their budgets and many of the responsibilities relating to the recruitment, employment, deployment and remuneration of teaching and non-teaching staff in schools are delegated by the LEAs to school governing bodies. This delegation involves continuing consultation between the LEA and the school governing body on matters of staff management.

The amount of money to be allocated to each school is calculated by the LEA according to the Resource Allocation Formula. Some special schools and nursery schools continue to receive a partially delegated budget, which includes an allocation for books and other equipment but excludes staff salaries.

4. CURRICULUM

The Lower Attaining Pupils' Programme (GB DES/HMI 1989), was the first curriculum development initiative in recent times to be directly funded from central government. It was designed to:

- improve the educational attainments of pupils mainly in years 4 and 5 of secondary education, for whom the existing examinations at 16 years were not intended and who were not benefiting fully from school; and
- prepare these pupils better for the transition to adult and working life.

The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) was launched as a pilot scheme in September 1983, administered by the Manpower Services Commission (now the Training, Enterprise and Education Directorate of the Employment Department) and extended into a national scheme in 1987.

The Education (No 2) Act 1986 required governing bodies to make a statement indicating whether sex education was included in the curriculum and, if so, the nature of such instruction. The headteacher could authorise deviation from the governors' statement **only** if required by the syllabus of a public examination to be taken by pupils. Circular 11/87 (GB DES 1987) further stipulated that sex education, if provided, must be set in a moral context and have regard to the 'value of family life'. The 1986 Act also obliged the governing body and the headteacher to ensure that no promotion of partisan politics was carried out in the school and that, where political issues were concerned, their treatment would be balanced so as to reflect different views.

As Figure 1 shows, the notions of a common curriculum developed from broad fields of knowledge in 1977 into the National Curriculum of the Education Reform Act 1988, which is expressed almost exclusively as single subject disciplines. The way in which consensus about the principle of a common curriculum had been created by successive reports may be seen in the fact that the thrust of the objections to the consultative document *The National Curriculum 5-16 – a Consultation Document* (GB DES/WO 1987a) concerned the content and weighting of individual subjects within the proposed curriculum, rather than the principle itself. The consultation document reassured schools that a more precise description "implies no particular view of timetabling or teaching approach", but the Government acknowledged that "if programmes on these lines are to be pursued, it is likely that 80-85% of each pupil's time needs to be devoted to subjects which are compulsory or liable to constrained choices".

Figure 1: Stages in the development of a basic curriculum

DES 1977	DES/HMI 1980	DES 1980	DES 1981	DES 1984	DES 1985	ERA 1988
linguistic	English modern language	English	English modern language	English modern language	English and literature modern language	English modern language
mathematical	mathematics	mathematics	mathematics	mathematics	mathematics	mathematics
scientific	science	science	science	science	science	science
			craft, design, micro-electronics	technical education		technology
ethical and spiritual	religious education	religious education	religious education		religious education	
social and political	history		humanity	humanity	humanities	history, geography
		preparation for adult and working life	preparation for adult and working life		economic education, sex education, health education	economic awareness, multicultural, health careers, personal and social, environmental education
physical	physical education	physical education	physical education	physical education	physical education	physical education
aesthetic and creative	applied crafts, art		practical, aesthetic	aesthetic	aesthetic practical subjects	art, music

The Education Reform Act 1988:

- laid down the framework for a compulsory curriculum for each of four Key Stages;
- specified the three Core and seven other Foundation subjects and the cross-curricular themes which were to be studied at each Key Stage;
- reaffirmed the requirement in the 1944 Act that all pupils receive religious education and participate in a daily act of collective worship, unless their parents apply for exemption;
- expressly prevented the prescription of the amount of time to be spent on any subject area;
- introduced compulsory assessment of all pupils at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 years.

Following the introduction of the National Curriculum, DES Circular 7/90 (GB DES 1990b) made recommendations concerning the length of the school day, which were intended to replace the minima set out in the Education Act 1944.

The National Curriculum and the prescribed programmes of study have been criticised for being too prescriptive, too rigid and not allowing sufficient time to cover the cross-curricular themes and other topics, or subjects such as a second foreign language, economics, classics and so on. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, under the chairmanship of Sir Ron Dearing, conducted a wide scale review and the final report, published in December 1993, recommended a reduction, clarification and simplification of what should be taught, a review of the programmes of study in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and a revision of the curriculum for Key Stage 4 (DEARING 1993).

In 1991, the Government commissioned a report on primary education. The authors (Alexander et al 1992) reported that there was much to commend in the work of primary schools, but that there were unacceptable differences in the quality of teaching and in the standards which pupils attained between schools and sometimes between classes within schools. The authors recommended an increased use of whole-class teaching, more rigorously planned topic work and more flexibility in the ability grouping of pupils.

4.1. ASSESSMENT

In 1984, the Secretary of State stated that the Government would no longer accept examinations which formally catered only for the top 60% of pupils aged 16+. The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) was introduced to replace both the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level and the Certificate of Secondary Education examinations. The GCSE examinations were intended to raise standards across the whole ability range, to support improvements in the curriculum, to provide clear aims for teachers, to record proven achievement on what candidates know, understand and can do and to broaden the studies of pupils in the fourth and fifth secondary years. Courses leading to the GCSE started in 1986 and the first examinations were held in 1988. In 1994, a new grade 'starred A' (A*) was introduced to recognise outstanding examination performance.

Until the Education Reform Act 1988, there were no compulsory national tests for pupils. This legislation introduced a statutory requirement for pupils be assessed at the ages of (about) 7, 11, 14 and 16 years.

The Secretary of State set up a Task Group for Assessment and Testing, whose report recommended that the national assessment system should:

- be essentially formative, but should also indicate where there is need for diagnostic assessment;
- incorporate summative assessment for pupils aged 16+; and
- reflect the quality of each pupil's performance, irrespective of the performance of other pupils (GB DES/WO 1987).

The assessment tests were developed by specialist agencies under contract to, and supervised by, the School Examinations and Assessment Council and its successor, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Complaints about their complexity were addressed by Sir Ron Dearing in his 1993 review (DEARING 1993) and simplified tests are currently being developed.

5. TEACHING STAFF

The Education Act 1944 established the management of education as a triangle of power shared between the Education Department, the LEAs and the teachers. Teachers exercise influence on policy through teacher associations and on its implementation in their daily interpretation and transmission of the curriculum to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Teachers' involvement in decision-making on the curriculum and assessment has been seriously curtailed. Teachers had constituted the largest group on the Schools Council which reviewed and developed curriculum and assessment. The Schools Council was successively replaced by bodies which comprised members nominated by the Secretaries of State for Education and for Wales. In 1993, these bodies were replaced by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority in England and the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales whose members are appointed by the Secretaries of State.

5.1. TEACHER SUPPLY AND TRAINING

The status of teachers was improved by raising standards of initial and in-service teacher education. Graduate level training was introduced for all new entrants to the profession and all intending teachers were required to have a standard equivalent of GCSE grade C or above in English, mathematics and (by 1998) science. Cross-training schemes sought to improve the match between teachers' initial qualifications and their principal teaching subject. Later, a serious shortage of teachers in certain subjects and in certain geographical areas resulted in the introduction of training bursaries, retraining, the establishment of the Teaching as a Career Unit (incorporated into the Teacher Training Agency in 1994) and the early implementation of European Communities Council Directive 89/48/EEC of 21 December 1988 (GB DES/WO 1986, GB SI 1986 and Official Journal No L 19, 24.1.1989). Two alternative routes to Qualified Teacher Status were introduced, the licensed teachers scheme and the articled teachers scheme. Both are largely school-based training schemes with additional courses provided off-site. In 1993, School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) and an Open University distance-learning course were offered to graduates.

5.2. TEACHER PERFORMANCE

By 1985, concern for teacher numbers was replaced by considerations of the quality of their performance and Her Majesty's Inspectors conducted a survey on teacher performance (GB DES/HMI 1985a). The Department of Education and Science identified one of the most crucial responsibilities of the LEAs as the management of the teacher force, to ensure that teachers' professional commitment, skills and knowledge are used to best effect in the schools (GB DES 1985). However, the Education Reform Act 1988 delegated this responsibility to the governing body of each school.

The appraisal of teacher performance was formally carried out only during the first year of service (the probationary year) by the LEA and, where appropriate, by Her Majesty's Inspectors. However, the Education (No 2) Act 1986 introduced compulsory performance appraisal for all teachers, to be implemented between 1992 and 1995 (GB DES 1991). As a result, the probationary year was abolished for new teachers appointed on or after 1 September 1992 (GB DES 1992).

5.3. TEACHERS' CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1987 established a formal link between pay and conditions of service and abolished the Burnham pay-negotiating machinery for school teachers. The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1991 established the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), whose remit is to examine and report to the Prime Minister on the statutory conditions of employment and remuneration of school teachers in England and Wales on an annual basis. The Secretary of State has the power, but not the duty, to consult with relevant associations on the STRB's report before ordering changes in teachers' pay and conditions for the following year.

The Education Reform Act 1988 empowered governing bodies to set staffing levels and, through the LEA, to employ and dismiss staff. Governors were empowered to pay teachers above or below the recommended salary levels, subject to their available budget. This effective increase in the number of employers, from 120 LEAs to some 20,000 governing bodies, makes it difficult for Teachers' Unions to negotiate national agreements on salaries or conditions of employment. It has consequences for teachers' security of employment because LEAs can no longer redeploy redundant staff from one school to another and an LEA has no obligation to find employment for teachers who do not want to remain in a school after it achieves grant-maintained status.

Traditionally, teachers' responsibilities had been laid down in case law (the duty to act *in loco parentis*) and in a general contract, which required teachers to be present on the school premises at all times when the school was in session and to carry out such tasks as the headteacher might reasonably require. The Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act 1987 redefined teachers' responsibilities in terms of 1265 hours of directed activities and specific tasks related to the conduct, teaching, guidance and assessment of pupils; to record-keeping, reporting to and consultation with colleagues, parents and others; and to the management and review of the work of the school and of their own and their colleagues' performance and professional development.

It could be argued that the shift of teacher responsibility from the identification of and provision for pupil needs to the 'delivery of the National Curriculum', has resulted in a role which is largely executive rather than professional. Such rationalisation is consistent with the increased emphasis on the efficient delivery of a service within a restricted budget. Equally, the selection, deployment and appraisal of staff by non-professionals is facilitated by a standardised unambiguous job description. Staff development courses (especially those subsidised by central government grants) have tended to concentrate on the development of general management skills for headteachers and on helping teachers prepare for the new teaching programmes and methods associated with TVEI, GCSE and the National Curriculum.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

A number of initiatives were introduced to help all children achieve their educational potential, irrespective of their sex, race, religion or nationality.

Acting on the findings of the Warnock Committee (Warnock Report 1978), the Education Act 1981 sought to eliminate the educational deprivation which resulted from the categorisation of pupils by disability. It required LEAs to conduct a multi-professional analysis of a child's specific educational needs and to recommend appropriate provision, either at the parents' request or whenever the educational provision made for a child differed from that made for his or her peers. Where appropriate, a Statement of Special Educational Needs recording the child's needs and the proposed provision is drawn up and reviewed annually. It was expected that most pupils would be integrated into ordinary schools, thus reducing the number of special school places. It was also hoped that up to 18% of pupils in ordinary schools, whose educational needs had previously been deemed insufficiently serious to warrant the pupils' transfer to a special school, would benefit from special support.

On the basis of experience since the implementation of the 1981 Act, the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (GB DFE/WO 1994) was drawn up and, following a period of consultation, came into effect on 1 September 1994. It established a new relationship between LEAs and schools, with the former acting as purchaser and the latter as provider. The Education Act 1993 required LEAs to establish Pupil Referral Units for pupils who, due to illness or exclusion, cannot attend ordinary schools.

The Local Government Act 1966 (Section 11) had introduced a special scheme to fund the employment of staff specifically to help meet the English language and other education and welfare needs of children of immigrants and refugees. Projects which fall under this scheme are funded by the Home Office and are known as Section 11 projects.

Pupils in inner city schools have also received targeted assistance. One of the objectives of the City Technology Colleges (see Section 3.1) was to establish prestigious 'magnet schools', in urban areas, where pupil motivation and staff morale were depressed. A three-year funding programme under the GEST scheme (see Section 3.3) focused on raising standards in inner-city schools. It supported the national pilot of Reading Recovery and a range of other numeracy, technology, parental involvement and school management projects. In 1994, 20 Government schemes were brought together under the Single Regeneration Budget designed to 'enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people, particularly the young and those at a disadvantage, and promote equality of opportunity'. During 1995/96, £78 million was to be spent on 92 projects which include education as a feature.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

The majority of school support services are provided in England and Wales by LEAs which were established by the Education Act 1944 to provide and organise public education services in their area. The Education Reform Act 1988 and subsequent legislation transferred many of the LEAs' responsibilities to central government or to school governing bodies (see Section 3). LEAs are now responsible for:

- securing, in collaboration with the Funding Agency for Schools, as appropriate, sufficient schools and teachers to provide efficient education to meet the needs of the population of their area and to deliver the National Curriculum, and co-ordinating school admission policies and arranging for parental appeals against school placements;
- quality assurance in the schools which they maintain and for taking initial action in schools which are identified as being 'at risk' in the school inspections which are carried out in accordance with the Education (Schools) Act 1992 (see Section 8);
- dealing with complaints from parents or others against the LEA or against the school governing body of an LEA-maintained school and concerning the delivery of the National Curriculum and other related matters;
- preparing schemes for LMS and for ensuring that the governors comply with requirements of the scheme and manage the school's budget in a satisfactory manner. Where governors fail to comply with requirements or mismanage the budget, LEAs have the power to suspend a school governing body's right to a delegated budget;
- setting a budget for the education service in their area, for determining the funding for individual schools in accordance with the LMS formula and for publishing information on funding for individual schools;
- securing capital funding from central government and delivering the capital programme;
- applying for and administering grants under the GEST scheme (see Section 3.3);
- establishing a policy on charging for activities for which a charge may be made in accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988;
- making statutory checks on all teachers and people employed in schools maintained by them in accordance with the relevant Circulars;

- advising governing bodies on the appointment of headteachers and formally employing or dismissing teachers on the recommendation of school governing bodies;
- securing the regular attendance of pupils enrolled in their schools by investigating cases and causes of non-attendance and by ensuring that the procedures for the employment of children are followed;
- implementing, with local authority Social Services Departments, the Children Act 1989;
- assessing and making provision for the special educational needs of children aged between 2 and 19 years, in mainstream schools, or in special units or special schools. LEAs must maintain an Educational Psychology Service to assess the special educational needs of individual children and to provide guidance and counselling for parents and teachers to help them meet these needs;
- establishing Pupil Referral Units for those pupils who are not attending schools because of illness or because they have been excluded;
- conforming with the direction of the Secretary of State for Employment under Section 45 of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993 with regard to the provision of careers services for pupils in schools and students in colleges of further education.

LEAs must

- provide free transport for pupils who do not live within walking distance of the school. The LEA may provide free or subsidised transport for all pupils if it wishes;
- ensure that free school meals are provided for those pupils whose parents are receiving income support (Social Security Act 1986);
- provide a youth service and adult education;
- compile returns and reports and respond to enquiries from the Department for Education (DFE) and other statutory bodies, such as the Ombudsman and the Audit Commission;
- set term and holiday dates for LEA-maintained schools;
- devise and publish a curriculum statement for religious education and establish and service the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE);
- establish health and safety policies and procedures and ensure that the school premises regulations are respected;
- secure the availability of governor training.

LEAs support teachers through teachers' resource centres, advisory and support teams in particular curricular areas and the provision of in-service training courses. They oversee the appraisal of teachers in accordance with the Education (N° 2) Act 1986 and consult with teachers' and other unions.

LEAs may also provide school meals or clothing for children who would otherwise be unable to take advantage of the education provided.

The Employment and Training Act 1973 had placed a statutory duty on local authorities to provide a careers service. However, under the terms of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment is now required to secure the provision of careers services for students in schools. These services include the collection and dissemination of information about employment, training and education, and the provision of advice and guidance. In most parts of England and all of Wales, careers services are now being delivered by newly formed career service companies under contract to the Secretary of State. Some of these include LEAs in partnership with other organisations. The government has announced its intention to legislate at the earliest opportunity to further improve careers education and guidance in maintained schools, including securing the provision of careers education in maintained schools, and making schools and colleges responsible for working with the careers services.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

The Government has traced a clear link between education and economic prosperity. Within the education service, it determined:
"to ensure as far as it can that, through the efforts of all who are involved with our schools, the education of our pupils serves their own and the country's needs and provides a fair return to those who pay for it" (GB DES 1985: para 11).
The evaluation of the education service thus focuses on accountability and is carried out through the definition of targets and the measurement of output in terms of pupil performance, teacher performance and school performance.

8.1. DEFINING TARGETS AND MEASURING OUTPUT

The National Curriculum defines targets in specific terms for all pupils.

The Education Reform Act 1988 introduced LMS (see Section 3.2) to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In order to make the self-management of schools effective, the Department for Education recommends the use of a School Development Plan. Advice on how to formulate the plan is given in two handbooks: *Planning for school development* and *Development planning: a practical guide. Advice to governors, headteachers and teachers.*

Financial guidance has been given to LEAs, specifically by the Audit Commission (see Section 2).

8.2. PUPIL PERFORMANCE

Pupil performance is assessed in relation to National Curriculum targets at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 through Standard Assessment Tasks and public examinations leading to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) (see Section 4) and specified vocational qualifications.

The Government believes that the publication of pupils' results in National Curriculum assessment tests and public examinations enables teachers, parents and other interested parties to see how children are progressing individually and in relation to the national average. Therefore, schools are obliged to produce a written report each year, recording each child's progress and, where relevant, results in Standard Assessment Tasks (GB DES 1990a). The Government has sponsored pilot studies on National Records of Achievement and has issued model formats of report cards and National Record of Achievement Folders to all schools to promote their use (GB DES 1990).

In addition, the Education Act 1981 had entitled parents to request an assessment of their child's special educational needs and to see the resulting report. The Data Protection Act 1984 gave parents the right to see their child's school record, subject to certain safeguards.

8.3. TEACHER PERFORMANCE

The regular cycle of appraisal (see Section 5) is intended to help teachers, their managers and their employers to monitor individual performance in the context of the institution's aims and objectives, and to plan and provide the necessary staff development support.

8.4. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The Government has argued that the publication of school performance tables would help schools plan future provision for their pupils and would enable parents to choose between schools (GB DES 1991a). School governing bodies are therefore obliged to publish information on the school's aims and objectives, provision for the National Curriculum and extra-curricular activities and details of pupils' attendance rates, performance in National Curriculum assessment tests and public examinations. They must produce an annual report on the school's progress and the outcome of any formal inspection of the school which takes place (see below). Governors must also arrange for an annual meeting for parents to discuss the report.

The Education Act 1944 required the Secretary of State to secure regular inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate and others and empowered LEAs to inspect their own establishments. The Education (Schools) Act 1992 transferred responsibility for inspections from LEAs to governing bodies and set out the framework for inspections of each school at four-yearly intervals in England and at five-yearly intervals in Wales. These inspections are carried out by inspection teams, led by a Registered Inspector, acting under contract to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England or Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in Wales. The reports of the inspection must be made available and the governing body (together with the LEA, with respect to the schools which it maintains) must establish and implement an action plan to overcome any deficiencies identified in the course of the inspections and report on progress at its annual meeting for parents. LEAs are responsible for quality assurance in the schools which they maintain and for taking initial action in any of their schools which a formal inspection finds to be failing to provide appropriate education for its pupils.

There has been widespread criticism that the best examination results do not necessarily indicate the best schools. Research organisations, LEAs and universities are undertaking independent research into ways of demonstrating the 'value added' by schools to pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding and the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority has commissioned pilot studies to identify a system of comparative information which would be 'straightforward, intelligible to parents and based on pupils' actual attainments'.

NOTE: For a full analysis of these reforms, see Le Métais 1995.

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Abbreviations

CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CTC	City Technology College
DES	Department of Education and Science
DFE	Department for Education
ERA	Education Reform Act 1988
GB	Great Britain
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GEST	Grants for Education Support and Training
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
LEA	Local Education Authority
LMS	Local Management of Schools
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SI	Statutory Instrument
TGAT	Task Group for Assessment and Testing
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative
WO	Welsh Office

UNITED KINGDOM (NORTHERN IRELAND)

1. AIMS

1.1. THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THE AIMS OF THE EDUCATION SERVICE AS A WHOLE:

- To ensure that young people receive a sound basic education and develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and motivation they need for their personal and social fulfilment.
- To help people of all ages and abilities develop the skills, competences and creativity needed for the social and economic strengthening of Northern Ireland.
- To help to build a more peaceful community based on mutual understanding and respect for diversity.
- To ensure genuine equity and equality of opportunity for all.
- To equip people with the breadth of vision needed for life in the twenty-first century and in the wider national and international context.
- To enhance the quality of life and personal fulfilment of the whole community through access to a broad range of cultural and recreational provision.
- To provide high quality services which will be responsive to the needs of the community.
- To manage services effectively and efficiently, building on partnership among all the organisations in the service.
- To develop the skills and talents of all those employed in the education service and to involve them fully in improving the service.

1.2. RAISING STANDARDS

In Northern Ireland, as in Great Britain, raising standards is the main objective of the Government's strategy for education. In particular this is promoted by:

- ensuring that all schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum;
- delegating responsibility for implementation of the curriculum and management of the school to local level;
- increasing the opportunities for parents to influence the choice of schools for their children and for their involvement in the running of the school;
- ensuring that all schools provide regular, consistent and objective information on the performance of their pupils during, and at the end of, the four key stages;
- ensuring that the special educational needs of children and young people are identified and met as effectively as possible, and enhancing the opportunities for their parents' involvement in this process;
- raising the level of uptake of vocational qualifications, recognising in this area the substantial contribution which Further Education (FE) has to make to the raising of standards, skills and qualifications in the workforce;
- ensuring that a large proportion of young people obtain the benefits of participation in Higher Education (HE), as a means of improving the strength of the national economy and for wider social and cultural reasons;
- ensuring that, through research and development, the Higher Education sector makes its contribution to the industrial base.

2. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Public education in Northern Ireland, other than university education, is administered centrally by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland ("the Department") and locally by five Education and Library Boards ("the Boards").

Education reforms undertaken in Great Britain in recent years have aimed at providing the framework of a more efficient, effective and responsive education system, able to raise the attainments of children and young people and give parents a wider choice. In Northern Ireland, the fundamental reforms embodied in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 reflected many of the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988 for England and Wales, but included some important measures which were particular to Northern Ireland, such as the importance of education in improving understanding and tolerance between the communities in Northern Ireland.

Under the education reforms, the practical operation of all schools and colleges is increasingly becoming a matter for their Boards of Governors. They are responsible for the delivery of the curriculum, admission of pupils and, in the case of schools with delegated budgets, for the management of their own financial affairs, including staffing matters (see section on Local Management of Schools – 3.7.).

Other aspects of the reforms in education include: the creation of a common curriculum to be studied by all pupils from age 4 to 16; the promotion of support for integrated education (where Roman Catholic and Protestant children are taught together); open enrolment, whereby parents are afforded a greater choice of school to which they can send their child; and more information for parents on their child's and the school's performance, and systems of appeal.
These issues are further explained later.

2.2. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Department has a strategic role in developing and implementing education policies and it is concerned with the whole range of education from nursery education through to further and higher education, as well as sport and recreation, youth services, the arts and culture (including libraries) and the development of community relations within and between schools (see section 7.1. – Community Relations).

The Department administers the Teachers' Superannuation Scheme, a contributory pension scheme providing retirement benefits, death gratuities, family and dependant benefits and provision for additional voluntary contributions. It also pays teachers' salaries on behalf of the Education and Library Boards, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, and some Voluntary Grammar and Grant-Maintained Integrated schools.

2.3. EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS

Each Education and Library Board is the local education authority for its area. Boards were first appointed in 1973, as part of a general reorganisation of local government, and are reappointed every four years; they were reconstituted in July 1993. The membership of each Board consists of District Councillors, representatives of transferors of schools (from the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church, which transferred most of their schools to the state), representatives of trustees of maintained schools and other persons who are interested in the service for which the Board is responsible.

The Boards' role is one of establishing general systems, both practical and advisory, to support schools and colleges. Their duties include ensuring that there are sufficient schools of all kinds and colleges of further education to meet the educational needs of their areas. Boards are wholly responsible for the schools and colleges under their management.

In addition, they are responsible for the costs of capital works at controlled schools, the maintenance of voluntary maintained school premises, for providing equipment in those schools and meeting their running costs through the Local Management of Schools arrangements. Boards are also responsible for the school meals service in maintained schools.

The Boards award university and other scholarships; identify and make provision for children with special educational needs; provide milk and meals, free books and transport for pupils; enforce school attendance; provide a curriculum advisory and support service to all schools and colleges in their area; regulate the employment of children and young people; and secure the provision of recreational and youth service facilities. They are also required to develop a comprehensive and efficient library service for their areas. Board expenditure is 100% funded by the Department of Education.

2.4. THE COUNCIL FOR CATHOLIC MAINTAINED SCHOOLS (CCMS)

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools was established in 1990 to exercise certain responsibilities in relation to all Catholic maintained schools which are under the auspices of the diocesan authorities and of religious orders. The main objective of the Council is to promote high standards of education in the schools for which it is responsible. Its functions include providing advice on matters relating to this sector, the employment of teaching staff and the administration of teaching appointment procedures, the promotion of effective management by Boards of Governors of these schools and the promotion and co-ordination of effective planning and rationalisation of school provision in the Catholic maintained sector.

The membership of the Council consists of trustee representatives appointed by the Northern Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, and persons appointed by the Head of the Department of Education in consultation with the Bishops, parents and teachers.

2.5. NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR THE CURRICULUM, EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT (NICCEA)

Prior to 1 April 1994, the Council's functions were carried out by two separate Councils – the Northern Ireland Curriculum Council and the Northern Ireland Schools Examinations and Assessment Council. However, these were merged at 1 April 1994 to form the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

The Council keeps all aspects of the curriculum and assessment for grant-aided schools under review and advises the Department on such matters as the Department may refer to it or as it may see fit. As part of this role, it is required to consult widely on any proposals it intends to put forward and to take account of views expressed during consultation before submitting recommendations to the Department. It has also produced in-service teacher training materials, guidance and advice for teachers on various aspects of the new curriculum as well as guidance materials to accompany the new programmes of study.

The Council's functions also include the conduct of GCSE, GCE AS and GCE A level examinations, the development and conduct of assessment arrangements for pupils at ages 8, 11 and 14, the conduct of Transfer Procedure tests (see paragraph 4.3.) and the provision of guidance for schools on the Records of Achievement process. The Council advises the Department on matters relating to assessment, examinations and Records of Achievement.

3. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

In Northern Ireland, as elsewhere in the United Kingdom, the law guarantees that every school is open to all pupils regardless of religious denomination. Some schools have both Protestant and Catholic pupils, but most Catholic pupils attend Catholic schools and most Protestant children attend State (controlled) schools. Segregated housing has been an important determinant of patterns of school attendance in many areas.

The Northern Ireland education system provides free education for all children of compulsory school age (4-16) as well as for those who choose to stay on until age 18. Nursery schools provide for children aged 3 and 4, primary schools for children between the ages of 4 and 11, and secondary (including grammar) schools for children between the ages of 11 and 16/18.

Whilst education provision in Northern Ireland is organised on similar lines to that in England and Wales, there are some significant structural differences. Secondary education remains largely a selective system with pupils going to grammar schools or secondary (High) schools according to academic ability. There is also a very large voluntary school sector in Northern Ireland consisting of Catholic maintained schools and voluntary grammar schools. A large rural school sector, mostly small primary schools, caters for local communities.

3.1. CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

Controlled schools are managed by Education and Library Boards through Boards of Governors. Primary and secondary school Boards of Governors consist of representatives of transferors (mainly the Protestant Churches) along with representatives of parents, teachers and the Education and Library Boards. Nursery, grammar and special school Boards of Governors consist of representatives of the latter three categories. Running costs are met in full, under the Local Management of Schools arrangements, administered by the Education and Library Boards.

3.2. VOLUNTARY MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Managed by Boards of Governors which consist of members nominated by trustees (mainly Roman Catholic), along with representatives of parents, teachers and Education and Library Boards. Running costs are met in full, under the LMS arrangements, administered by the Education and Library Boards; approved capital building costs are grant-aided up to 85% by the Department (see section 3.4.).

3.3. VOLUNTARY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

The main distinguishing feature of grammar schools is that they are permitted to select pupils on the basis of their ability. All grammar schools provide courses for the entire 11-18 range and tend to concentrate on preparing pupils for courses in further or higher education. Managed by Boards of Governors which consist of persons appointed as provided in each school's scheme of management along with representatives of parents and teachers. In certain cases where schools have entered into agreements with either the Department or an Education and Library Board, or both, a proportion of members are appointed by these bodies. Approved capital expenditure attracts grant of up to 85% from the Department (see also section 3.4.). Since the 1991/92 financial year, running costs in voluntary grammar schools have been funded through LMS formula funding arrangements administered by the Department. Apart from a small capital fee, education is free. Eleven voluntary grammar schools in Northern Ireland offer boarding accommodation. Boarding fees vary from approximately £1,000 - £1,800 per term and overseas pupils also have to pay tuition fees.

3.4. NEW CATEGORY OF VOLUNTARY SCHOOL

Legislation to create a new category of voluntary school was introduced in November 1993. This allows existing voluntary maintained schools and voluntary grammar schools to opt for designation as a new category of voluntary school which will be eligible for 100% capital grant. Such schools are managed by a Board of Governors on which no single interest group will have a majority of nominees. Existing voluntary schools prepared to change their management structures are able to opt for this arrangement at any time.

3.5. INTEGRATED SCHOOLS

In recent years a small number of integrated schools (both Controlled Integrated, which are maintained by the Education and Library Boards, and Grant-Maintained Integrated, maintained by the Department but managed by Boards of Governors) have been established at primary and secondary level with the aim of providing education for Roman Catholic and Protestant children together. Initial proposals to form such schools are made on behalf of local parent groups seeking integrated education for their children. The schools must enroll reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Catholic pupils to obtain 100% grants for approved running costs and capital expenditure.

The 1989 Order has also placed the statutory duty on the Department to "encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education". The Department pays grants to the NI Council for Integrated Education and helped found a charitable trust known as the Integrated Education Fund; both of these bodies seek to promote the development of integrated education.

3.6. INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

There are also a few (18) independent (private) schools which cater for a very small proportion of the total school population and which receive no financial assistance from public funds.

3.7. LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS (LMS)

The local Management of Schools (LMS) requirements of the Education Reform Order introduced new arrangements for the financing of schools from 1 April 1991. From that date, all nursery, primary and secondary schools have been funded on the basis of a formula. That formula relates a major element of each school's resources to the number of pupils can attract. However, it also takes account of other important factors in the running of a school such as the size of the school premises, curriculum support for relatively small schools and social and educational disadvantage. Formula funding is ensuring that all schools are funded on an open and objective basis in relation to their needs.

From 1 April 1991, all secondary schools have had fully delegated budgets which means that each school receives an overall financial allocation and it is for the Board of Governors to decide how to prioritise its spending within that allocation – including teaching and non-teaching staff costs. Nursery and primary schools have had partially delegated budgets with responsibility only for the non-staff elements of their budgets; and by January 1996, some 715 (77.3%) of primary schools have accepted full delegation on a voluntary basis. It is anticipated that other primary schools will be offered, and will accept, full delegation on a phased basis over the next few years.

3.8. CHARGES

Schools are allowed to charge for optional extra activities, which are those not connected with the school's curriculum or examinations being taken by a pupil. These may be waived in certain circumstances. Details of these charges are published in each school's prospectus.

4. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

4.1. NURSERY EDUCATION

Nursery education is provided either in nursery schools or in nursery classes in primary schools. Although the level of nursery provision in Northern Ireland is lower than that in Great Britain, over 60% of all 4-year-olds are enrolled in infant classes (which are distinct from nursery classes) in primary schools. As a result, the proportion of 3- and 4-year-olds in Northern Ireland receiving an early start to their education, either in nursery or primary schools, is broadly similar to that in Great Britain.

4.2. PRIMARY EDUCATION

The lower limit of compulsory school age requires a child who reaches the age of 4 on or before 1 July to start school on 1 September that year. However, some 4-year-old children who have not reached the compulsory school age may be enrolled in primary schools with surplus places.

4.3. TRANSFER FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

Arrangements for children transferring from primary to secondary education allow parents to express their preferences as to the secondary school they wish their children to attend. All secondary schools are required to admit children up to their approved admissions number and to publish the criteria which will be used to select pupils if they are over-subscribed. The results of tests in English, mathematics and science are used by grammar schools to determine which pupils should be admitted.

4.4. SECONDARY EDUCATION

Post-primary education is provided for in secondary intermediate (High) schools (ages 11-16 plus some provision for 16-18), and in grammar schools (ages 11-18). Only grammar schools are allowed to select pupils on the basis of their ability, but every school must draw up admissions criteria for the selection of pupils (see paragraph 5.3.).

4.5. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under the 1986 Education and Libraries (NI) Order, Boards have responsibility to provide for children and young people with special educational needs up to age 19; for example, for visual and hearing impairments, physical disabilities, speech and language difficulties or moderate/severe learning difficulties. This provision may be made in primary schools, secondary schools, special units or in day or residential special schools. If a child is unable to attend school, home tuition may be provided. Arrangements enable Boards to arrange for the special educational provision to be made elsewhere, should suitable facilities not exist in Northern Ireland.

The curriculum and assessment provisions of the Education Reform Order apply to the special sector in the same way as to primary and secondary schools. However, in a minority of cases, these are modified or disapplied in the children's statements of special educational need in order to meet their particular needs and abilities. The LMS initiative has not been fully extended to special schools.

4.6. NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NCVQ)

4.6.1. NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In 1986, a new four-level framework of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) was announced nationally with the formation of NCVQ. This framework, which has now been extended to include a fifth level, will cover all occupational areas with NVQs which relate to competence in the workplace and are based on standards set by industry. FE colleges have a leading role in the delivery of the new system.

4.6.2. GENERAL NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (GNVQS)

In September 1992, GNVQs were introduced in selected schools and colleges in 5 vocational areas. A new form of qualification, GNVQ is intended - together with NVQs - to replace other vocational qualifications and become the mainstream national vocational provision for education and training. GNVQs will provide a foundation from which students can progress into either further or higher education, employment or further training, i.e. a genuine alternative to A levels. Certain colleges and schools in Northern Ireland are offering GNVQs as part of the phased introduction of this initiative.

4.7. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL YEAR

In Northern Ireland, the dates of terms and holidays are set by the Education and Library Boards for controlled schools. For all other schools, the dates of terms and holidays are set by the relevant school authorities and approved by the appropriate board. The school year runs from the beginning of September to the end of the following June, with eight weeks summer break and two weeks at Christmas and at Easter.

4.8. RURAL SCHOOLS

The Department of Education for Northern Ireland is currently engaged in an on-going review with the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools concerning the potential for the rationalisation/amalgamation of small schools. The review takes into consideration: enrolments; proximity/accessibility of neighbouring schools; condition of existing premises; social and economic conditions; and demographic/community considerations.

5. CURRICULUM

5.1. THE NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM

The curriculum in Northern Ireland is made up of Religious Education and 6 areas of study as follows:

- English;
- Mathematics;
- Science and Technology;
- The Environment and Society;
- Creative and Expressive Studies; and
- Language Studies (Irish-medium schools and secondary schools only).

Religious Education has been, and remains, a compulsory element of the curriculum in all grant-aided schools. A core syllabus has been drawn up, with the agreement of the four main Churches, and this must be taught in all grant-aided schools.

The six areas of study are made up of groups of subjects covering broad portions of the curriculum. Pupils will take at least one subject within each area of study during their compulsory school years. For each subject, programmes of study, which describe the essential content of the subject, the skills and the understanding pupils should be expected to gain as a result of their studies, have been prepared. The programmes of study for English, mathematics, science and Irish (in Irish-medium schools) were introduced in September 1990, and those for history, geography and physical education in secondary schools in September 1991. Those for technology and design, art and design, music and modern languages (secondary level only) were introduced in secondary schools in September 1992.

The primary curriculum and the curricular requirements at key stage 4 have recently been reviewed and it is planned that new arrangements will be introduced from September 1996. Under the new arrangements teachers at primary level will have additional time to devote to matters outside the statutory curriculum. In addition, at key stage 4, while pupils will continue to take at least one subject from each area of study, there will be a greater choice of subjects.

In addition, a number of educational (cross-curricular) themes will be included in the curriculum for all schools. These will not be separate subjects but will be woven through the main subjects of the curriculum. The educational themes are:

- Education for Mutual Understanding;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Health Education;
- Information Technology;
- Economic Awareness and
- Careers Education.

The first 4 of these will be included in the curriculum in both primary and secondary schools. The remaining two will also be added at secondary level.

5.2. EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

The assessment system is intended to provide information about what pupils know, understand and are able to do at all ages and is based on the continuous monitoring of pupils' performance by their teachers. At ages 8, 11 and 14, pupils will be formally assessed; formal assessment at age 16 will be mainly through the GCSE examinations.

The assessment arrangements are currently being piloted in schools and external tests are being trialled in a small number of schools.

Beyond the age of 16, most pupils staying on at school follow General Certificate of Education Advanced (GCE A) and Advanced Supplementary (AS) level courses (see paragraph 4.6. on the development of GNVQs). Standards of examination in Northern Ireland are equivalent to those in England and Wales, and are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. The Council ensures that there is a unified and coherent approach to the curriculum and assessment.

More young people leave school with A levels in Northern Ireland than in England and Wales. Also, a consistently higher proportion of Northern Ireland 18-year-olds enter higher education than is the case in England and Wales.

5.3. OPEN ENROLMENT: EXTENSION OF PARENTAL CHOICE OF SCHOOL

Parents have the right to express a preference for the school which they wish their children to attend and children must be admitted to the preferred school – provided there is room at it.

Where schools are over-subscribed, children must be admitted on the basis of published admissions criteria drawn up by the school. These arrangements apply to both primary and secondary schools. The criteria for grammar schools must ensure that pupils who obtain top grades in the transfer procedure tests are admitted before pupils with lower grades.

Article 37 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 requires each Education and Library Board to make arrangements to enable parents to appeal against the refusal of a particular controlled, grant-maintained integrated or voluntary school, to admit a child. Legislation has also expanded Article 37 to require Education and Library Boards to make similar arrangements for the parents of a pupil (or the pupil if over the age of 18) to appeal against a decision to expel a pupil from a school.

5.4. CURRICULUM SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

To ensure that schools and their teachers have the necessary support for the introduction of the new common curriculum and other aspects of education reforms, Education and Library Boards have been given a statutory responsibility to provide curriculum advice and support to all schools. To facilitate this, the Boards have now extended their advisory services to enable them to give comprehensive support, including the necessary in-service support for teachers, across all areas of the curriculum. In addition, the Department has introduced a greatly enhanced minor works capital programme to ensure that all schools have the necessary physical accommodation, particularly laboratories and workshops, to deliver the common curriculum.

6. TEACHING STAFF

6.1. TEACHER TRAINING

Both colleges of education in Northern Ireland, Stranmillis College and St Mary's College are solely concerned with teacher education, mainly for the primary school sector in respect of which four-year (Hons) BEd courses and one-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses are available. The training of teachers for secondary schools is provided, in the main, through the PGCE route, in the education departments of the two universities, but four-year (Hons) BEd courses are also available in the colleges for intending secondary teachers of religious education, business studies and craft, design and technology.

Another secondary-orientated course provided by the two colleges is a shortened three-year (Hons) BEd course in craft, design and technology for mature students.

Under the Education Reform (NI) order 1989, responsibility for the further training of teachers rests mainly with the Boards. Management training for senior staff and training which can best be undertaken at a regional level is provided by the Boards' Regional Training Unit, established in September 1990.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

7.1. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Department has responsibility for the promotion and development of community relations in the Education, Youth and Community sectors, through sport and recreation and cultural media such as the museums and arts. The importance of community relations has been given additional recognition and emphasis by the introduction of the cross-curricular themes of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Cultural Heritage. While EMU in the curriculum is compulsory, it is not mandatory for schools (or youth and community groups) to make contacts with schools of the opposite denomination. Nonetheless, the Department considers it highly desirable that they should, and has supported the provision of programmes and facilities in cultural institutions such as museums to facilitate this development.

The Cross-Community Contact Scheme is one initiative among many which have been formulated to foster contact between the communities. This provides for the payment of grant-aid to schools to create and develop cross-community contact through continuous and collaborative activities leading to greater mutual understanding. The Boards administer the Youth Service Support Scheme which has similar aims in the youth and community sectors.

7.2. RAISING SCHOOL STANDARDS

See paragraph 1.2.

7.3. SPECIAL EDUCATION

See paragraph 4.5.

8. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

8.1. CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

Careers education and guidance has been an integral part of the curriculum in post-primary schools in Northern Ireland for many years but as part of the education reforms process in 1989, careers education became a compulsory element for all pupils up to 16 years of age. The educational (cross curricular) theme of careers education is now a statutory requirement for pupils aged 11 to 16.

All schools will be required to draw up a policy statement covering the whole careers programmes for all pupils and to publish this in their prospectus. It is intended that the objectives for careers education should be implemented mainly or wholly through the contributory subjects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in post-primary schools.

While careers education aims to develop skills and to enable young people to make choices from a broad basis of knowledge and understanding, Careers Guidance provides information and advice on specific options relevant to the young person's interests and aptitudes. Good careers education is the essential support for effective careers guidance. Both should aim to broaden the horizons and raise the aspirations of young people and help them achieve their maximum potential.

The local education and library boards have a designated officer, normally a careers adviser, to assist schools with careers education. In addition, the careers service, which is provided in Northern Ireland by the Training and Employment Agency, has officers available to schools to provide advice on career paths.

9. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

9.1. THE NORTHERN IRELAND EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

The Inspectorate is the main source of professional advice for the Department, and the sole group with responsibility for inspection in the education service in Northern Ireland. The Inspectorate gives objective and independent professional judgement.

The basis of the Inspectorate's work lies in its first-hand observation and evaluation of standards, practice and provision in schools, colleges of further education, teacher training institutions, adult education and the youth service. The Inspectorate compiles reports on individual institutions and on broad surveys across a range of institutions. All of these reports are published.

Inspection is seen as one component in a broad strategy for raising quality, and of achieving quality assurance.

The Inspectorate also inspects and reports on the quality of training in all Government-aided industrial training establishments (including training on employers' premises). Reports of these inspections are passed to the Training and Employment Agency, on whose behalf the inspections are carried out.

MAIN SOURCES USED

Information Brief on Education in Northern Ireland, DENI, 1994.

The Education Service in Northern Ireland – a Strategic Analysis, DENI, 1994.

UNITED KINGDOM (SCOTLAND)

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

There have been several major changes between 1984 and 1994 in Scotland's educational provision. With regard to Compulsory Education (ages 5 to 16), the reforms may be considered to fall into two main categories: management and curriculum.

1. MANAGEMENT REFORMS

1.1. SCHOOL BOARDS

All schools are required to form a School Board (following the School Boards Act 1988) with responsibility for aspects of management of the school. It should comprise representatives from the community and local businesses as well as from the body of parents and teachers. Most schools in Scotland now have a School Board [1994].

1.2. OPTING OUT

The Self-governing Schools Act (1989) allowed schools to "opt out" of regional authority control and to become self-responsible, with central government as the ultimate authority.

1.3. INFORMATION ON PERFORMANCE

The Education (Schools) Act 1992 required the better provision of information for parents on the performance of schools and pupils.

1.4. PUPIL ASSESSMENT

Pupils throughout Scotland are now assessed at five "levels" of attainment in language skills (English) and mathematics. It is, however, the teacher's decision as to when such testing is appropriate, and the testing is done on an individual basis and at each "level" of attainment to confirm teachers' own assessments. Results are not published, either at individual or at school level. Such assessment may take place between ages 5 to 14.

1.5. PUPIL RECORDS

A new form of report booklet on individual performance has been designed centrally and is being recommended for uptake in the authorities. This will promote consistency among authorities and will allow detailed teachers' comments as well as parental response.

1.6. SCHOOL HANDBOOKS

All schools are expected to produce informative handbooks for prospective pupils and their parents, indicating such data as past pupils' performance in national examinations, rates of truancy, school leavers' destinations and school costs.

1.7. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Schools are expected to formulate on-going development plans as a basis of the school forward programme and based on an audit of school performance. These will reflect staff and pupil needs according to context and will incorporate the demands of national developments such as the 5 to 14 Programme (section 2.1.).

1.8. DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

By 1995, 80% of school costs will be managed by the schools themselves, advised by the School Boards. This is intended to increase schools' autonomy and accountability.

1.9. SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES

Following the publication of the Parents' Charter (1991), the need for information to give to parents concerning school performance was clear. The Inspectorate has devised a large number of Performance Indicators (PIs) to aid the measurement of effective learning and teaching. This work is now being continued by a centrally funded Audit Unit whose task is to devise further ways of evaluating the impact of schooling, including aspects of ethos and 'school climate'. At upper secondary level, schools' examination results and statistics on school costs and truancy are now published by the Audit Unit annually.

1.10. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND APPRAISAL

Authorities, in conjunction with all schools, have to set up co-ordinated programmes of staff development together with school-organised appraisal of teachers' performance and training needs.

2. CURRICULUM REFORMS

Curriculum reforms are invariably recommended by the central administrative authority, ie. the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID). It is for the regional education authorities to implement them according to the Guidelines issued directly by SOEID or in conjunction with the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum, a national body which advises on curricular developments.

2.1. THE 5-14 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Since 1991, recommended curricular guidelines for pupils between the ages of 5 and 14 have been issued by central government and are being gradually adopted by the education authorities. They cover five levels of learning in five subject areas (Language, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts, Religious and Moral Studies) in addition to six cross-curricular approaches (Enterprise Education, Environmental Education, Gender Awareness, Information Technology, Media Education, Multi-cultural/Anti-racist Education). There are associated guidelines on Assessment and Recording based upon national testing, and a *5-14 Headteachers' handbook* with further advice.

2.2. PRIMARY TEACHING OF MODERN LANGUAGES

It was agreed (1994), following a successful pilot period, that all pupils in the last two years of primary schooling (ages 10 and 11) will learn at least one foreign language. The four languages from which schools may choose are French, German, Spanish and Italian.

2.3. LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

Since the early 1980s, reform of lower secondary education has been on-going. The need for reform was identified in 1977 in two major reports, the Munn and Dunning Reports. Developments since then have gradually reformed the curriculum content and forms of assessment for those coming to an end of compulsory schooling (age 16). Most of the development of the new curricula has been carried out by working groups which include practising teachers.

The final stages of the implementation of the Standard Grade programme of curriculum and assessment reform in lower secondary education (ages 12 to 16) have now been overtaken. The framework of curriculum provision is described in *Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages* (SCCC).

Awards at Standard Grade in all subject areas are at Foundation, General or Credit Level, in ascending order of difficulty. Detailed requirements for assessment in all subjects at national level (i.e. through national examinations administered to pupils aged 16 or older) may be obtained from the Scottish Examination Board. Subjects taught number between 30 and 40.

The National Certificate, a vocationally orientated programme of short courses ("modules"), which was at first intended for post-16 study, has proved popular in schools, and many 15- and 16-year-olds follow these in school in addition to taking Standard Grade subjects. The full list of all modules (which now number several thousands) may be obtained from the Scottish Vocational Education Council.

Upper secondary education reform is now underway (1994). It is not, however, part of compulsory schooling, since it refers to age 16+.

3. IMPORTANCE OF THESE REFORMS

Most policy decisions concerning reform arise from the requirements of Government, which enacts legislation on behalf of its electorate. The reforms are important because they reflect the Government's priorities which in the case of this administration have developed over a period of 15 years. The current Conservative government holds strong views about the values to be promoted in the country at large and through the education system. It has sought to promote and underpin these values through a wide programme of reform in the major areas of health, education and social security.

The reforms are not simply ideologically driven however. They reflect a conscious awareness on the part of all Scottish education providers of the need for examination and improvement of the product, and support the establishment of common syllabuses and standards, with staff guidance on implementation. While the policies relate to the need for accountability, they also reflect the changing times and the need for all schools to take forward their thinking in preparation for the future.

4. PURPOSE OF THESE REFORMS

In addition to the broad purposes outlined above, the Government's main intentions in introducing their Management reforms may be summarised as follows:

- to increase accountability of education authorities, schools, headteachers, and school managers, and of individual teachers;
- to devolve responsibility to the point of most immediate implementation, i.e. the individual school;
- to promote participation in educational provision locally, by local community members and by parents who are viewed by government as the prime consumers of educational services;
- to raise awareness by provision of information at all levels in the system, so that pupils and parents are able to follow comparative analyses and make more informed decisions as to their future actions;
- to improve performance by identifying practice at all levels within the school system, and by highlighting through open reporting the strengths and weaknesses of particular establishments.

The purposes of Curricular reforms have been:

Primary

- To establish common syllabuses and standards;
- to offer guidance to staff in their implementation;
- to reflect future national and international demands on our young people.

Secondary

- To promote a greater degree of scholastic openness for pupils of all abilities;
- to help all pupils achieve maximally;
- to offer credit to pupils for those achievements;
- to offer maximum choice in their areas of study;
- to better prepare pupils for what is to follow, whether that be in the form of academic study in upper secondary, or more vocationally orientated study in the post-compulsory further education sector.

It was hoped that lower secondary reforms would encourage more pupils to stay voluntarily at school beyond the compulsory age, and this has indeed proved to be the case - the trend towards staying on voluntarily among 16-year-olds in Scotland is reflected in a rise from 51.8% in 1981/82 to 63.7% in 1993/94. Of course, it is recognised that demographic and economic factors have also played a part in this.

Reforms of upper secondary education in Scotland have been in preparation for some time, and are expected to receive first implementation in 1998/99.

The Government's policy will concentrate on making more flexible the relationship between "academic" and "vocational" qualifications obtained in the upper secondary school, such that pupils are offered through a unified system more choice and opportunity to achieve well in their areas of strength, without being debarred from other areas of study.

The reasons for these reforms can be summarised as follows:

- too few pupils were staying at school beyond compulsory age, with a consequent loss of potential to themselves and to the country;
- too few pupils were realising their potential to its full, even when they did remain at school beyond compulsory age;
- too few pupils were well-prepared for further and higher education after school, with a consequent drop-out at this stage;
- Scotland was coming out badly in comparative studies with countries in Europe and the rest of the world as regards levels of attainment and staying-on rates;
- reforms at lower secondary level had led to expectations by pupils of continued methodologies which were not reflected in the provision of upper secondary education (e.g. self-directed study, project/portfolio work, investigative projects).

Upper secondary education is not, however, within compulsory schooling, although its influence on it is considerable.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPE OF THE REFORMS IN DETAIL

1980s Lower Secondary (Standard Grade)
Ages 12-16
Curriculum and Assessment reforms

1990s Primary
Ages 5-14
Curriculum and Assessment reforms

1990s Upper Secondary
16-18+
Curriculum and Assessment reforms

The full framework for the curricular implementation of the reforms is described in *Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages - Guidelines for Head Teachers*: First Revised Edition 1989 (SCCC).

The 5-14 Development Programme reforms have resulted in a series of Guidelines issued by SOEID. There are 12 booklets in total, covering English Language, Mathematics, Assessment, Expressive Arts, Latin, Reporting, Religious and Moral Education, Modern European Languages, Environmental Studies, Personal and Social Development, Gaelic, Structure and Balance of the Curriculum. National Testing, which is related to the implementation of the 5-14 Guidelines, is explained in the introduction to this paper.

The Upper Secondary reforms, which have not yet been implemented, are described in *Higher Still*, following the report of the Howie Committee (see *A Guide to the Proposals of the Howie Committee*). The Howie proposals were not accepted by the public, so the Government produced an amended version of the reforms. These reforms do not refer to the years of compulsory schooling (5-16) but will have a strong influence on them.

6. INTRODUCTION OF REFORMS

Where possible, investigation of the implications of the proposed reform is carried out, frequently including research launched as part of the Government's educational research programme. This is followed by a report, which is made publicly available. Debate and public consultation follow. Decisions are finally made by SOEID.

A typical example is the 5-14 Development Programme. Concern at results in the Assessment of Achievement Programme (Government-funded research) together with inspection by HM Inspectorate led to a Government initiative, calling for the development of new curricular materials for the years of primary schooling. These were developed by working groups which included class teachers. These working papers were subjected to further discussions and amendment prior to final decisions on content. Thereafter, implementation allows for some local variation. The degrees of freedom allowed to schools will vary among the regional education authorities.

Summary

The Scottish model of reform will normally seek to include:

- investigation/research, involving schools;
- consultation, via broadly-based Committees and use of 'experts';
- report (by researchers or HMI) through SOEID;
- consultation (open to public) + decision making;
- development including teachers' participation;
- implementation, negotiated with EAs.

7. TIMESCALE

Lower Secondary reforms: ten years;

Primary reforms: ten years, but teacher unions are resistant to this;

Upper Secondary reforms: five years, but unions resistant.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

1. AIMS

Reform of the aims of education may be summarised as follows:

1.1. PRIMARY EDUCATION

There has been a change of emphasis rather than of aims in primary education – towards better organisation and standardisation of the curriculum, and towards more provision of information to the consumers, i.e parents.

1.2. SECONDARY EDUCATION

The previous system of "O Grade" examinations, intended to be taken by the most able pupils (top 30%), was being tackled by almost 50%; this was in fact inappropriate for many of these pupils. The reformed "Standard Grade" system of Foundation/General/Credit Awards allows differentiation at individual level in individual curriculum subjects.

This was a deliberate change of aim in secondary education. Reform of the curriculum and assessment approaches made them more pupil-centred and individualised so that pupils could progress at their own pace. Learning became more active and empirical, less passive and receptive. Different levels could be achieved in different subjects, and pupils could decide how many subjects to tackle. There are, therefore, wide variations of achievement among pupils, but all are given the possibility of goals, and goals which are known to be achievable.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

There has been no change to the age at which compulsory education starts and ends. As to stages, there has been no change to the age at which pupils move from primary to secondary education (age 12), but the idea of "5 to 14" is a new concept, intended to smooth the primary/secondary transition and lead directly into Standard Grade at age 14.

Primary school classes are co-educational and of "mixed ability", i.e. pupils are not grouped into classes according to their intellectual ability. This has been the case for many decades in Scottish state education, and there have been no reforms in this regard.

Comprehensive secondary education was established in the 1960s. The first two years are "mixed ability", and all pupils follow a "common course" (the same for all). Thereafter, pupils are put into "sets" according to their ability in each subject, as they approach Standard Grade, the external examinations at the end of compulsory schooling (age 16). Secondary schooling has for decades been co-educational in Scotland.

Entry to secondary education is available to all, regardless of attainment, and is free. No reforms in this regard have occurred in the decade 1984-94, although access to private education for less well-off pupils has been facilitated by the Assisted Places Scheme in the 1981 Act, which makes access to private education easier financially. A total of 4.3% of all pupils choose private educational provision in Scotland, and this must be paid for. There has been a 1% increase in such uptake in the decade under consideration, 1984-94.

Diversity of subject choice has increased as a result of the introduction of Standard Grade and Revised Highers, as have opportunities for obtaining qualifications with the availability of National Certificate modules in addition to Scottish Certificate of Education courses.

The academic year has not changed over the course of the decade. Holidays are placed much as they were in the early 1980s, with approximately two weeks at Christmas and Easter, and six weeks in the summer, running from early July to mid-August.

Parental choice of school, introduced in the 1981 Act, allows parents to make special "placing requests" to have their children attend a school of their own choosing. These choices may be made on grounds of proximity to work, convenience or known academic standard as expressed in published results. Until that time, placement in schools was the right and responsibility of regional education authorities, and was almost entirely based on the geographical location of the pupil's home. There was no option to transfer elsewhere, except by moving house or by exceptional agreement of the authority. Priority in placement is, however, still decided on the basis of geographical proximity and those pupils closest to a school will have first choice of that school in most instances.

As pupil numbers fall, it has been necessary to create "composite classes" which include more than one year group. There have, however, been attempts to avoid school closures in most areas. This has been particularly important in rural areas, and many of Scotland's schools fall into that category. In cities, closures have happened more often, with less destructive results since more choice exists.

Open and distance learning including the use of IT is used in rural schools, especially in the Highlands, to counteract the effects of distance, small classes and lack of staffing.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

3.1. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The curriculum is administered by regional educational authorities via schools. There has been no change in this respect in the decade concerned.

Scottish Certificate of Education examinations are still administered nationally by the Scottish Examination Board, but now in addition the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) administers the assessment of National Certificate modules, introduced in the mid-1980s. These two organisations are being merged.

Vocational education has been subject to reform at post-compulsory level, with the establishment of SCOTVEC and the incorporation of colleges of Further Education (post-16) which were previously administered by the regional education authorities. SCOTVEC is responsible for the recognition of the award of the National Certificate and of General Scottish Vocational Qualifications, which comprise modules of work in defined areas with a vocational bias. Assessment is carried out in schools or colleges (or in the workplace) but work is sample-reviewed by assessors, or moderators, as they are known.

Although the National Certificate was not intended for school pupils, it has been taken up enthusiastically by schools; its administration is therefore a matter for school organisational planning.

Decision-making on major curriculum reforms continues to be at national level, in central government offices, but probably more attempt is made than previously to involve other levels in planning, development and implementation. Nevertheless, schools and education authorities have on occasion shown signs of resistance to change and reform, as a result of the pace and volume of change.

Finance for special developments such as the 5-14 programme comes from central government, and special budgets are earmarked for the purpose. Neverless, education authorities must put in resources such as those required for in-service training, and must allow teachers time off for development work nationally and regionally.

3.2. ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

Organisational structures within schools have not changed markedly to meet the new demands. Secondaries are still based on subject departments, with a senior management hierarchy. In primary schools, the Headteacher takes the lead in developments and reforms. This was always the case and does not represent a change. More cross-curricular work and team work is now necessary and is encouraged by both central and regional authorities.

The public has the opportunity of more input than previously, both at primary and secondary levels, through School Boards, and pupils are now sometimes represented on the Boards, which is a new development.

School Boards are now involved in the selection of Headteachers, which does represent a change. They are not involved in the selection of staff at other levels.

Schools are gradually taking control of the greater part of their budgets (80%) through the reform known as Devolved School Management (DSM). This allows much greater flexibility of expenditure according to the needs of the particular institution.

4. CURRICULUM

The curriculum model has changed in secondary education to being more flexible, more varied and more open to all. The model in primary education has changed to being more standardised and inclusive. In both primary and secondary schools, education has become more pupil-directed, and is essentially geared to the needs of the individual and to differential abilities within as well as between pupils.

Overall, however, the curriculum may be said to have become more closely defined by central government, although a wide degree of choice is available. Although curriculum content may be more influenced by the expectations of the SOEID, its delivery is more flexible than before, with, for instance, the inclusion of adults in secondary school classes studying for examinations. The curriculum continues to be a negotiated model between the planners (central government) and the deliverers (education authorities, schools and teachers).

Some new subjects have appeared, e.g. cross-curricular studies such as Environmental Studies at primary school level. At secondary school level, core skills have become of paramount importance, and all subjects must promote them. They are: communication, numeracy and learning; technological, creative and critical thinking; personal, moral and social development. They are delivered through the 9 "modes" of study: language and communication;

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mathematical studies and applications; scientific studies and applications; social and environmental studies; technological activities and applications; creative and aesthetic activities; physical education; religious and moral education.

As regards teaching methodologies, the new courses require pupils to be more active in their learning, and the pace of learning is geared to the child's requirements. More folio-based work is evident at both primary and secondary levels, as is problem-solving and investigative treatment of issues and the use of computers to support learning. This is in contrast to pre-1980s curricula, which tended to be teacher-driven, whole-class, passive and non-investigative.

Assessment has also altered, with the introduction of the new examinations. In secondary schools, a form of criterion-referenced assessment using "grade-related" criteria has replaced normative assessment. National norms are established at primary levels, but are used only diagnostically. External examinations are taken only at the end of compulsory education (age 16) and beyond; the national test at the end of primary education (age 12) was abolished in the 1960s. Even at age 16, there has been an increase in internal assessment in schools as part of the overall assessment in Scottish Certificate of Education courses, and SCOTVEC National Certificate modules are entirely assessed within the learning institution.

5. TEACHING STAFF

Admission requirements to teacher training courses used to be lower than those for university. However, the teaching profession became all-graduate in 1983, so the minimum requirement for admission to teacher education is now the same as that for any other university course, i.e. 3 Highers passes, and an additional 2 Standard Grades. For intending teachers, these must include Higher English and Standard Grade Mathematics.

Teacher training for primary education used to require 3 years' study; now a B.Ed (Primary) requires 4 years. Secondary Education has for decades required a degree plus one year's training. The type of training is undergoing a change of emphasis, with more weight placed on the time spent in learning classroom skills, and schools are being approached for additional help in this training. In Scotland, however, there was always considerable emphasis on "teaching practice", i.e. that part of the teacher training course devoted to learning practical skills in the classroom, and college tutors have assessed trainees in these skills in situ from the 1930s.

Official requirements are as follows:

B.Ed (Primary)
4 academic sessions, to include not less than 30 weeks' school experience, the greater part of it taking place in the latter 2 years.

Post Graduate Certificate of Education (Primary)
50% of the 36 week course must be given to school experience.

Post Graduate Certificate of Education (Secondary)
22 of the 36 weeks of the course must be given to school experience, a recent change from 18 weeks.

(Other details are in the *Guidelines for Teacher Training Courses.*)

Specialisation (e.g. for teaching pupils with special educational needs) is invariably taken up after some years' experience of teaching. The same is true of the Diploma in Early Education. Music and Art teachers are required to have a degree level qualification in their subject, followed by a year's teacher training.

In-service training may be delivered by SOEID, by education authorities and by schools themselves. A three-level scheme of awards was proposed in 1984 by the National Committee for the In-Service Training of Teachers which encompassed work at school, regional and national level. Subsequent industrial action in schools prevented this from being implemented. The Main Committee, which reported in 1986, recommended a more systematic approach to staff development, requiring an assessment of needs through staff appraisal. The Scottish Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff in School Education issued a Circular in 1987 requiring that the working hours of teachers should include up to 50 hours in each academic year for planned activity time (PAT) relating to the wider needs of the school, e.g. curricular development, in-service training, professional development. Later, in 1987, the Secretary of State for Scotland set up the Scottish Committee for Staff Development in Education (SCOSDE) to initiate, encourage and co-ordinate staff development opportunities at national level, and the Association of Directors of Education agreed on guidelines for the conduct of pilot studies in staff development, to include staff appraisal.

Staff Development and Appraisal has now been instituted in schools following the publication of National Guidelines in 1991 (see Annex 6) and education authorities are developing ways of managing staff development based on training needs uncovered in the course of staff appraisal.

Separately, the Government initiated a training programme for headteachers on management issues, producing a set of modules for use from 1990.

Teacher recruitment continues to be the responsibility of the education authority, but, following the School Boards Act of 1988, School Boards may now be involved in the appointment of Headteachers. In private education these regulations need not apply.

The teaching profession is closely regulated by the requirements of the General Teaching Council (GTC), established in 1967. Practising teachers must have GTC recognition as well as the appropriate academic qualifications. This also applies to teachers coming from overseas to teach in Scottish state schools, and has been the case for some years, although the last decade has seen a sharpening of these conditions. Teachers in private education are not subject to the same requirements.

The teaching profession has had one recent innovation: the title of "senior teacher" may be awarded to those with outstanding classroom work, who do not wish to become involved in education administration. There is a financial benefit associated with the title. Teacher mobility has diminished as pupil numbers drop, and the profession is ageing as fewer young teachers are employed. There is a problem of non-employment among education graduates.

6. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

Compensation for deprivation varies among education authorities, since it is less of a problem in some areas than in others. Strathclyde and Lothian, the two most populous regions, both have policies to counteract the effects of social and material deprivation. All EAs have equal opportunities policies for gender and race equality.

The changes in these areas have been gradual and have reflected national trends towards greater awareness. Compensatory education now has to justify itself economically, and in a period of economic stringency there may have been in some regions a tendency to cut back on such programmes. This is a matter of practical reality, not political tendency.

Education during the compulsory period is free to all children. This has been the case for more than a century. It is possible that in future some form of voucher scheme or financial credits may be made available to all students over 16, to encourage further education and training, but this is only now under consideration and no policy has emerged as yet.

The recording of special educational needs has been subject to considerable change in the 1980s, following the publication of the Warnock Report (1978) which applied to the whole of the UK, and of The Education of Pupils with Learning Difficulties (SOEID, 1978). The Assessment of Needs and a requirement to open a Record of Needs may be necessary in certain cases to ensure appropriate provision, and this may have resource implications for the providing authorities. The process involves health, psychological and school personnel as well as parents. Education authorities determine the kind of special needs provision they wish to make. In many regions, integration of pupils with special needs into mainstream education is a desideratum, and one region claims to have achieved complete integration. Learning Support Teachers have become the norm in most schools. They help the mainstream classroom teacher with the education of individual pupils with special needs in their classes. These trends have become established over the decade 1984-94.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

In Scotland, guidance services for pupils have been available in schools since the 1970s. Such advice covers the curriculum, career choices and personal and social issues, and is provided by teachers promoted to specialist Guidance posts. No reforms have taken place recently in this area. Schools also benefit from the expert support of the psychological service, which has seen considerable rationalisation; the work concentrates on family treatment as well as diagnosis of needs, and has grown administratively with the advent of the recording of special needs (see previous section). The use of Records of Needs, and of Future Needs Assessment was introduced in the 1980s following the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, and has had a considerable impact on the service in terms of workload. Research carried out under the SOEID research programme indicates that the new recording system is not always successful in securing the resources needed to meet the special needs of recorded pupils.

Schools all have libraries, and secondary schools have librarians, as part of the regional authority educational provision. This gives pupils and teachers on-the-spot access to resource materials in school; in addition, most regions have centralised educational resources centres, usually for the use of teachers only. The main area of development has been in the use of computer-based administration and information systems.

8. EVALUATION AND INSPECTION

Her Majesty's Inspectorate is responsible for the overall evaluation of educational provision. No major changes in its structure have occurred, although it is a recent innovation that lay persons are now allowed to join inspection teams on visits to schools.

For the last ten years, all Inspection reports have been made public as part of the Government's policy on Open Reporting. Schools which are inspected are therefore subjected to scrutiny not only by HM Inspectorate but thereafter by the public who are potentially their customers, as parents and pupils.

Further evaluation of the educational system is implicit in the establishment of the Audit Unit, which has been part of the Inspectorate for some 10 years, and which publishes national examination results by school in addition to developing performance indicators in the assessment of quality in education. Following publication of the Parents Charter, the Audit Unit grew out of the much longer established Research and Intelligence Unit (RIU) which carries out exploratory and evaluative research in educational issues which have policy significance, and which regularly publishes its findings. The RIU has been in existence for some 25 years.

Regional authorities may have their own Quality Assurance or Assessment Units, depending on resources and population. Generally, the more populous regions have established their own administrative structures in this area, whereas more sparsely populated regions rely on the national services.

School Development Plans require that the senior staff in all schools address the issues of quality and delivery of effective education. Performance indicators should now be built into forward planning in schools, and are the benchmarks for progress. Evidence of this is now examined by the Inspectorate in the course of inspections.

At individual level, staff appraisal is carried out in all schools. Reforms in this area were introduced in 1991. Individual strengths and weaknesses are examined within the framework of assessing effective delivery of education, and training should reflect the results of this analysis. The schools are only now becoming familiar with this process.

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ICELAND

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

A number of very significant changes have been made to the Icelandic compulsory school system *(grunnskóli)* during the period concerned. The most extensive changes were adopted with the Law on Compulsory Education of 1991, the Law amending the division of functions between the state and local municipalities of 1989, the National Curriculum Guide of 1989, the Act on the Legal Protection of the Designations "Compulsory School Teacher" and "Headteacher" of 1986, Laws concerning the University College of Education of 1988, the Law concerning Upper Secondary Schools of 1988 and the Equal Opportunities Act of 1985. The latter section of this account explains the individual changes which have taken place during the decade concerned. A new law on Compulsory Education was adopted in 1995 and marks a major step in the direction of decentralisation in education, as responsibility for compulsory education has been transferred to local authorities as of 1 August 1996. These changes, however, are not described in the present summary.

The following are the principal changes which have been introduced in the *grunnskóli*:

1. EXTENSION OF THE PERIOD OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

- In 1984, the adoption of nine years of compulsory education (*grunnskóli*) was fully implemented when the ninth year (15-year-old pupils) was made compulsory.
- In 1991, the introduction of 10-year compulsory education was enshrined in law, i.e. compulsory schooling now begins at the age of 6 years.
- The Compulsory Education Act of 1991 prescribes a nine-month school year for all compulsory schools.
- During the period 1984-94, education authorities have aimed at increasing the weekly number of hours of teaching provided in compulsory schools.

The extension of the period of compulsory schooling was a political decision, aimed at increasing and improving the basic education of Icelandic children. These reforms include all the *grunnskólar* in the country and have been fully implemented. There has been continuous public discussion concerning both the length of the school year and the number of weekly hours of teaching. It is evident that in many rural areas there is some opposition to the lengthening of the school year to nine months, and this provision has not been completely implemented. There is, however, considerable pressure on education authorities to increase the number of weekly hours of teaching, pressure which has come not least from teachers and parents. Teachers have, for instance, justified the lengthening of the school day with reference to new curricular material provided for in the National Curriculum Guide for which time has not been provided in the model time table. When national governments have introduced austerity measures, resulting in reductions to the weekly hours of teaching, such has always evoked vigorous protest.

The Compulsory Education Act of 1991 included for the first time a statement of the intention of establishing single-shift education in all compulsory schools, partly due to increased public demands that all pupils be entitled to begin their school working days well-rested and at the same time in the morning. Despite the policy declarations of the political parties, all of which endorse single-shift schools in their platforms, this provision has not yet been implemented, although many local authorities have done their part in most recent years to accelerate the progress toward single shifts. Recent years have witnessed widespread discussion on the necessity of single-shift schools among teachers, parents, members of local government and parliamentarians.

2. NATIONAL CURRICULUM GUIDE

- In 1989, a new National Curriculum Guide was adopted for compulsory schools which includes a number of innovations and provides for new areas of instruction to be covered in compulsory schools.

The publication of a new National Curriculum Guide was an important factor in setting general education policy in accordance with the changes which had taken place in society since previous Curriculum Guides were published during the period 1975-77. The publication of the National Curriculum Guide in 1989 was also intended to meet the demands of teachers to be regarded as professionals and to have their expertise valued accordingly by leaving it up to them to further develop the objectives of the Curriculum Guide through the publication of school curriculum guides and by giving no directions on the methods of instruction. The Guide introduces various new areas of instruction to which the education authorities request the schools to devote increased attention, such as human rights, addiction prevention, equal rights and environmental issues. Special follow-up measures have been taken by the education authorities in several of these areas as they are considered very important.

Both during the period of its preparation and during the entire year following its publication, the Ministry of Culture and Education carried out extensive information activities on the National Curriculum Guide. There was prodigious discussion among educationists of the policy established in the Curriculum Guide and many areas of dispute were examined thoroughly. It is safe to say, however, that a reasonable reconciliation has been achieved with regard to the National Curriculum Guide, which may be in part attributed to the fact that during the preparatory stages parents, active teachers, and various specialists were consulted on individual sections and various contentious matters. A draft of the Curriculum Guide was published in 1988 and distributed to all schools and various interested parties. The Curriculum Guide itself was subsequently published in the spring of 1989 and the following autumn all the compulsory schools in the country began operations in accordance with its provisions. Following the publication of the National Curriculum Guide, a special Compulsory Schools Development Fund was established to encourage innovation in education.

3. INCREASED DECENTRALISATION

- The Law amending the division of functions between the state and local municipalities of 1989 took a decisive step to increase decentralisation in education by increasing the responsibilities of local authorities in education.

This legislation was part of changes intended to increase the responsibilities of local authorities for education and transfer operations from the national government to local authorities or their associations. There have been increasing demands in recent years for the executive authority to be moved closer to the scene in order to unite initiative, execution and financial responsibility. Local authorities are regional, democratically elected administrations expected to provide a variety of services to the public. Local government members are generally in close contact with their constituents, who thus have increased opportunity to influence directly the scope and organisation of those services than in cases where services are provided by the state. There are obvious gains in efficiency resulting from having the operation of compulsory schools in the hands of a single party. This simplifies administration, in addition to which compulsory education may be regarded as part of the services provided by local authorities and connected to various other local operations, for instance, in the area of specialist services or other services which local authorities provide for youth. Changes in this area have reached all the local authorities and schools in Iceland.

4. EDUCATION OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS

- The Act on the Legal Protection of the Designations "Compulsory School Teacher" and "Headteacher" of 1986 is intended to ensure that only professionally qualified teachers shall be employed in compulsory schools.
- Since 1988, emphasis has been placed on offering studies to obtain teachers' qualifications to instructors in compulsory and secondary schools who lack professional qualifications, and on continuing and post-graduate studies for active teachers and school administrators.

It is important that compulsory schools employ well educated teachers who have good professional qualifications and a grasp of the variety of teaching methods available to achieve the objectives of the National Curriculum Guide. Because of the high numbers of unqualified instructors employed in compulsory schools, especially in rural areas, teachers and education authorities felt it necessary to pass specific legislation to protect the designations of "compulsory school teacher" and "headteacher". Following the adoption of the protection legislation, studies to obtain qualifications as teachers were offered to unqualified instructors by means of distance learning and these have been extremely well received by the latter. All signs indicate that, within a short time, only professionally educated teachers with full qualifications will be employed in compulsory schools. These measures extend throughout the country, but were most imperative in certain rural areas and specific subjects. There has been widespread discussion among compulsory school teachers as to the value of professional education and teaching qualifications for education in compulsory schools.

5. RIGHT TO STUDY AT UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL

- The Upper Secondary Schools Act of 1988 accords all pupils the right to study at upper secondary level, regardless of their academic achievement at compulsory school level.

Prior to the 1988 law concerning Upper Secondary School, pupils were required to obtain a prescribed minimum grade in compulsory school to be allowed to commence regular study in various upper secondary schools. In general, higher grades were demanded of pupils proceeding to academic studies than those entering vocational training. The basic principle of the legal provision allowing all pupils completing compulsory education to pursue study at upper secondary level regardless of academic achievement is to fulfil demands for equal opportunity in education and equal opportunities for all pupils to pursue upper secondary studies. This decision on the part of the authorities may also be partly explained by the increasing difficulties of unskilled young people in finding employment. Opportunities for study at upper secondary level had also been increasing since the mid-1970s with the result that a growing proportion of pupils each year proceeded to upper secondary study. Prior to the adoption of the Upper Secondary Schools Act in 1988, there had been little general discussion concerning these changes and promotion of the law was limited. Many upper secondary schools were not prepared to receive the very varied group of pupils which now had the right to begin study at upper secondary level. A number of upper secondary schools demand that pupils attend so-called preparatory studies for one or two terms in order to improve their knowledge of certain basic subjects before they commence regular study in the upper secondary school concerned, but these preparatory studies also existed in some schools before 1988.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT AREAS OF EDUCATION

1. OBJECTIVES

In 1974, new legislation concerning compulsory education was passed following extensive debate on education in Iceland. In 1991, a new law on Compulsory Education replaced the 1974 Act. Its objectives remained unaltered; alterations introduced were intended primarily to adapt education to changing social trends.

2. STRUCTURE OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Around 1985, serious discussion and investigation began on possibilities of decentralisation in the *grunnskóli*. At this time, the national government was completely responsible for compulsory school operations and many other tasks, including provision of educational materials, curricular supervision, examinations and in-service training of teachers, partly in the hands of personnel at the Ministry of Culture and Education. This discussion resulted in, among other things, the adoption in 1989 of the law amending the division of labour between the state and local municipalities. The legislation placed increased responsibility for schooling on the local authorities. The initial capital investment for compulsory schools, school bussing and all daily operations, and costs for supervision and boarding of pupils, for instance, are entirely the responsibility of the local authorities. Prior to the adoption of this legislation, the initial capital investment for compulsory schools had been divided between the national and local governments.

In 1966, the Department of Educational Research was established as a special department of the Ministry of Culture and Education and during the period 1966-84 provided curricular direction, teaching advice, a review of teaching materials and in-service training for teachers. At the same time, the Ministry conducted the nation-wide coordinated examinations in compulsory schools. Between 15 and 20 employees were in charge of these tasks at their most comprehensive, together with additional temporary personnel responsible for various projects. Concurrent with the discussions of decentralisation in the educational system, these tasks have gradually been transferred from the Ministry to other parties. In-service training of teachers was transferred in 1985-90 entirely to the University College of Education and the preparation of teaching materials to the National Centre for Educational Materials. Curricular direction and teaching advice by the Ministry were phased out between 1989 and 1992 and these tasks were formally transferred to Regional Offices of Education throughout the country. Following the adoption of the law on Compulsory Education in 1991, a special Regulation was issued to prescribe the duties of Regional Educational Officers, who serve as the regional representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Education. This Regulation makes specific provision for their role in providing advisory and psychology services and supervisory duties. Finally, in 1993, the control and conduct of the nationally coordinated examinations were transferred to the Institute for Educational Research. It should be added that the Regional Offices of Education, the National Centre for Educational Materials, the University College of Education and the Institute for Educational Research are financed by the state and, with the exception of the Regional Offices of Education which are under the direct control of the Ministry, they operate as independent institutions.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

During the period concerned there were actually very few changes to the administration, management and organisation of schools.

3.1. COMPULSORY SCHOOLS COUNCIL *(GRUNNSKÓLARÁÐ)* AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The 1991 Compulsory Education Act does, however, indicate the intention of education authorities to introduce further decentralisation at the upper levels of educational administration. It provides for a special Compulsory Schools Council which is to serve as a forum for co-operation between the Ministry of Culture and Education and other parties involved in compulsory schools affairs. Among the tasks of the Council were to be, for instance, keeping track of the laws and regulations concerning compulsory education and making suggestions for their improvement and harmonisation. The council was also intended to supervise the implementation of the law on Compulsory Education and encourage cooperation and coordination among those parties involved in compulsory school matters. The law also provided for the establishment of a joint committee of the Ministry of Culture and Education and the Union of Local Authorities in Iceland concerning the implementation of the law. The tasks of the committee were to include, for instance, drawing up a plan for the introduction of single-shift schools, extended and continuous classroom instruction, and school meals. Furthermore, the committee was to give its opinion on regulations concerning dealings between the state and local authorities. Neither the Compulsory Schools Council nor the joint committee became a reality, however, and the reasons may be traced to a new government which took office in the summer of 1991 and soon began a review of the law, with the intention of *inter alia* increasing the decentralisation substantially by aiming at a complete assumption of compulsory school operations by local authorities. The Compulsory Education Act, which was approved by the national government in 1995 provides for increased decentralisation and includes the transfer of all compulsory school operations to local authorities as of 1 August 1996.

3.2. SCHOOL COUNCILS

The Compulsory Education Act of 1991 provided for the establishment of a school council for each school with which school administrators should consult on the school's internal affairs. The move was intended to increase decentralisation in the school system. The council was to be comprised of one representative of the teachers and other school personnel, one representative of parents and one pupils' representative. This provision was not implemented either, or only to a very limited extent, and was not included in the Compulsory Education Act of 1995, since it was considered neither practicable nor advisable to organise school councils in this manner. The 1995 law on Compulsory Education does, however, provide a special parents' council for each school, comprised of three parents' representatives, assisted and informed by the school principal.

3.3. GRADE AND SUBJECT SUPERVISORS AND STUDY COUNSELLING

In accordance with collective bargaining agreements negotiated with teachers in 1989, principals were permitted to appoint year and subject supervisors from among their teaching staff. The idea behind this move was to transfer certain aspects of school administration into the hands of the teachers while at the same time increasing the responsibility of teachers and improving their position in the school. The supervisors' role is to improve study and instruction, under the direction of the principal. Year supervisors are, for instance, to supervise instruction, institutional functions, educational materials and equipment for one or more years. Subject supervisors are to supervise instruction in one or more subjects. They decide upon curriculum and methods in consultation with the teachers involved, keep themselves informed of innovative practices, and co-ordinate the evaluation of the studies of pupils under their supervision. Since 1989, these year and subject supervisors have managed to establish themselves in compulsory schools. That same year, rules were set concerning advisory teachers in compulsory schools, whose role is to provide advice and direction to new teachers on all areas of school practice.

The 1991 law authorised school principals to assign permanent staff duties as year supervisors and subject supervisors and advising new colleagues.

The 1991 Compulsory Education Act also provided for the first time for school counsellors in individual schools or Regional Offices of Education to provide study and vocational counselling and personal counselling in matters connected with the pupils' studies. This provision was never fully implemented as sufficient funding to do so was not made available.

4. GENERAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

4.1. DURATION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The law of 1974 provided for nine years of compulsory education, from the age of 7 to 16 years, and the right for all children to attend school from the age of 6 years, if parents so wished. The coming into force of the provision on nine-year compulsory schooling was initially postponed, but it was stipulated that it would be put into effect within 10 years' time. In 1984, the provision on nine years of compulsory schooling, according to the 1974 Act, came into force. In 1991, compulsory schooling was extended to 10 years instead of 9, i.e. it became mandatory to start school at the age of 6.

The 1974 legislation provided for a nine-year period of compulsory education, encompassing primary and lower secondary instruction. In addition, the law states that this schooling may be carried out within a single institution or be divided into two or more units, according to the decision of the Ministry of Culture and Education in consultation with the local educational council *(frœðsluráð)* The 1991 Act provided for 10-year compulsory education and aimed at having all compulsory schools provide single-shift instruction. The provision on single-shift instruction is the result of the fact that by far the majority of schools in urban areas have such limited facilities that all of their pupils are not able to attend the schools at the same time. Thus two different classes use the same classroom, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. In recent years, all the political parties have included single-shift schooling in their manifestos due to increased pressure from parents and society at large. Despite this, the government has not yet introduced measures designed specifically to implement this provision, although many local authorities have allocated increased funds to school construction to expedite the implementation of single shifts. The 1995 Compulsory Education Act provides for single shifts in all compulsory schools by the year 2001.

4.2. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLING

According to the 1991 and 1995 legislation, all children of compulsory school age must attend 10 years of schooling and be provided with suitable instruction irrespective of their learning difficulties, emotional or social problems and/or disabilities. All compulsory education, whether it takes place in general public schools, private schools or special schools, must be in accordance with the provisions of the law on Compulsory Education, the National Curriculum Guide of 1989 and other regulations on compulsory schooling. Schools do, however, have a certain amount of flexibility according to the National Curriculum Guide to take into account the situation and specific circumstances of individual schools and may devote more attention to individual subjects. Emphasis is also placed in the National Curriculum Guide on providing teachers with freedom to choose their own methods of instruction. Schools are also permitted by law to offer pupils at lower secondary level a number of study options, as the 1991 Compulsory Education Act stipulated that, in years 8 to 10, part of the subject matter could be freely selected by the pupils and that up to one-half of instruction time each school year could consist of optional subjects. This provision has not been fully implemented, as the great majority of schools offer optional subjects only to pupils in the 10th year.

The 1974 Compulsory Education Act aimed at making compulsory education available to all pupils in their districts of residence. Prior to this, there were a number of regional secondary schools *(héraðsskólar)* in the rural areas of the country which were attended by pupils from certain districts at lower secondary level or in the final years of their compulsory education. Schools including all years of compulsory education were gradually built up in individual communities. After 1990, this development had become so extensive in all areas of Iceland that the regional secondary schools were either closed or the roles of most of them altered.

The 1991 Compulsory Education Act provides for children to attend the public school located nearest to their home. The only significant exceptions to this are pupils attending private schools. There are very few private schools in Iceland, but they increased somewhat in number during the period 1984-94.

The provision authorising the organisation of compulsory schooling into separate units has been changed from that under previous legislation, in view of the prospect of increased decentralisation, i.e. this is now the decision of the local authority concerned, acting upon the opinion of the Regional Education Officer and with the approval of the Ministry. The 1995 Compulsory Education Act places this decision completely in the hands of the local authority. Compulsory school is 10 years of uninterrupted schooling, whether the school concerned includes all 10 years, years 1 to 7, 8 to 10 or some other arrangement as decided upon by the local authority.

4.3. LENGTH OF THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL YEAR

According to the 1974 Compulsory Education Act, the regular operating period of schools was to be seven to nine months each year. In this connection, special consideration was to be given to the local economy and to the situation in the school district. During the years 1974-91, the general tendency was for schools in urban areas to operate for eight-and-a-half to nine months annually and schools in rural areas for seven to eight-and-a-half months annually. This was amended by the 1991 Compulsory Education Act, which provided for the regular operating period of all compulsory school to extend over nine months a year, beginning on 1 September and concluding on 31 May. The law did, however, provide for Regional Education Officers to grant schools temporary exception from the nine month annual operating period. The resulting change was that schools operating for seven months disappeared and schools in rural areas now operated for eight, eight-and-a-half or even nine months. Education authorities have since placed emphasis on implementing this provision, and at present the great majority of schools in Iceland operate for nine months a year.

4.4. NUMBER OF PUPILS PER CLASS

In Temporary Provisions under the 1991 Compulsory Education Act, it was stipulated that for the academic year 1991/92 years 1 and 2 should have a maximum of 22 pupils per class and in 1992/93 the maximum should be 22 pupils per class in years 2 and 3 and 18 pupils in year 1. The 1974 law provided for a maximum number of 30 pupils in individual classes. This provision of the 1991 legislation was never implemented due to national government austerity measures, and the rule has been a maximum of 22 pupils in years 1 and 2 and 28 pupils in years 3 to 10. This proposed reduction in the numbers of pupils in classes grew out of pressure from parents and teachers and was intended to give teachers a better opportunity to meet the needs of individual pupils in classes of mixed abilities.

4.5. CONCLUSION OF COMPULSORY SCHOOLING

All pupils completing the 10th year are considered to have completed compulsory studies and receive a school leaving certificate. According to the 1988 Upper Secondary Schools Act, all pupils who complete their compulsory studies have the right to commence study at upper secondary level, irrespective of their academic achievements. This has caused some problems, however, and many upper secondary schools demand that pupils who have obtained less than 50% in Icelandic (language arts) and mathematics in their final year of compulsory schooling complete a course of preparatory study at an upper secondary school before they may commence regular study at upper secondary level. This reform, intended to provide all pupils with the right to enter upper secondary school, has not entirely had the effect intended, as a certain proportion of pupils cannot cope with study in upper secondary schools, and the upper secondary schools have had difficulties in offering studies which suit the abilities of all pupils.

5. CURRICULUM

5.1. NATIONAL CURRICULUM GUIDE

The National Curriculum Guide is a detailed plan for implementing the provisions of the law on Compulsory Education and other legislation providing for the internal operations of compulsory schools. The National Curriculum Guide performs two functions at once: it presents the policies of the education authorities and confirms developments which have originated and are rooted in the schools themselves. For a long time, a curriculum guide was understood to be a list of subject material. The underlying cause of this was the fact that, until recently, educational materials were in relatively limited supply. Often only a single textbook was available in each subject because of the extremely small market. It thus had to be assumed that the textbook covered the material which was to be studied and presented it in the order in which it could be suitably taught.

The National Curriculum Guide of 1989, which was based on the 1974 legislation, changed people's conception of the word "curriculum". The law refers to the National Curriculum, implying that several curricula could exist. Secondly, the emphasis was changed. Considerably more emphasis was placed on objectives and the description of objectives than earlier, while specific instructions as to subject matter were reduced. Thirdly, special discussion was devoted to general objectives, which were common to all subject areas or which had to be dealt with in addition to regular instruction. Fourthly, there were instructions as to how education was to proceed and how school operations were to be organised. During the 1980s, the tendency was to speak of various curricula, and it became common to refer to the official, published objectives, which were to apply to all pupils everywhere in the country, as the national curriculum. In accordance with the policy of increasing the autonomy and freedom of individual schools, reference was made to school curricula.

A draft of the general section of the National Curriculum Guide was published in 1983. At this time, plans called for the publication of the general section in one volume and curriculum guides for individual subjects in separate booklets. The draft of the curriculum guide discussed teaching and teaching methods in great detail. The draft was never, however, officially adopted, as it was considered too detailed where teaching methods were concerned and it lacked sufficiently clear policy outlines.

A new and revised National Curriculum Guide was published in a single volume in the spring of 1989. The following aspects are characteristic of the Curriculum Guide and indicate the change in policy and emphasis from the former curriculum.

- The interpretation and development of the Article of the law on Compulsory Schools Education dealing with objectives is considerably more extensive and detailed than before. The central points of the Article are presented in the form of objectives.

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- The informative and developmental roles of compulsory schooling are regarded as forming a single whole, referred to under the heading of education.
- The main objectives, general content and basic principles of teaching, evaluation and facilities are regarded as forming a mandatory framework, and other points as explanations and suggestions.
- School autonomy to organise pupils in classes and groups is reduced on the basis of very clear arguments for the integration of pupils of varying abilities.
- A special section of the National Curriculum Guide is devoted to study areas which do not, or only partly, fall within the scope of traditional subjects. Examples of this are human rights, addiction prevention, equal rights education, sex education, computer education and environmental studies.
- Increased emphasis is placed on co-operation between home and school and on mutual communication and trust and shared responsibility.

When viewed as a whole, the National Curriculum Guide of 1989 could be described as more open and flexible than the Curriculum Guide of 1976. The National Curriculum Guide also contains recommendations to schools concerning the drafting of school curricula to further develop the objectives of the National Curriculum Guide, for instance, with regard to the unique characteristics and situation in each school. These recommendations may be regarded as a step toward increased decentralisation and increased autonomy of schools to organise their school operations.

The National Curriculum Guide of 1989 added a number of study areas (cf. the list above) without assigning to them a specific place in the timetable. The number of weekly hours of instruction pupils receive, however, has gradually increased since 1989 and schools have been allowed to determine how these extra hours should be used and can decide to what subjects and study areas they are devoted. It should also be mentioned that, due to national government austerity measures, the number of hours of instruction in compulsory schools has repeatedly been temporarily reduced. Thus, almost every year has seen some alteration to the number of hours of instruction in compulsory schools which has made it more difficult for the schools to introduce effective instruction in the new study areas provided for in the National Curriculum Guide. At the same time, no measures have been taken by the education authorities to reduce the number of subjects or study areas in compulsory schools.

5.2. NATIONALLY CO-ORDINATED EXAMINATION

Since 1977, nationally coordinated examinations have been carried out in compulsory schools, usually four in number (in Icelandic, mathematics, English and Danish), although during the years 1990-93 examinations were only held in Icelandic and mathematics. Since 1993, there have been four nationally coordinated examinations each year in the above-mentioned subjects. The number of nationally coordinated examinations was reduced for the period indicated due to pressure from teachers, who desired the evaluation of pupils to be placed as far as possible in the hands of the schools themselves and the Minister of Education at that time responded to these demands. It was subsequently the political decision of a new Minister for Education to increase the number of examinations to four once more, in the same subjects as previously, with the objective of providing better information on the academic achievements of pupils in these subjects. The changes applied to all pupils in the 10th year of compulsory school.

Around 1990, the education authorities introduced for the first time nationally coordinated testing in compulsory schools for information purposes, in order to obtain as clear a view as possible of the situation in individual subjects. The results of such informative tests should provide parents, teachers and school administrators with indications of the extent to which pupils have acquired the basic abilities needed as a base for further study and thus serve as a guide for teaching. In view of the results, the school is expected to take steps to provide special assistance for the pupils who have not achieved a minimum knowledge level and ability. Several informative tests of this sort were carried out 1990-93.

5.3. COMPULSORY SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT FUND

To encourage reforms and innovation in education, the 1991 Compulsory Education Act provided for annual budget allocations to a special Compulsory Schools Development Fund. The Development Fund traces its origins to 1989 when schools were invited to submit applications for support for developmental work. Up until this time, schools had had no opportunity of obtaining special financial support from the education authorities for developmental work. The Fund was subsequently established by law in 1991 and has made annual grants to a variety of developmental and experimental projects in schools. The Fund has without doubt served well to support developmental work in compulsory schools and a number of projects supported have gained widespread notice and served to encourage innovative efforts in other schools.

5.4. EQUAL RIGHTS ISSUES

In 1985, Iceland adopted legislation on equality and equal rights of men and women. The law contains a special chapter on education which includes, for instance, the following: "Teaching on equal rights issues shall be provided in schools and other educational institutions. Teaching equipment and textbooks shall be such as to avoid discrimination. Schools shall, both through study counselling and workplace visits, seek to alter the traditional academic and vocational choices of males and females in accordance with the purposes of this Act." The Ministry of Education is responsible for the implementation of this provision in consultation with the Equal Rights Council. The Act was reviewed in 1991, and increased emphasis was placed on introducing equal rights viewpoints in all areas of school operation in addition to teaching on equal rights specifically.

In 1987, a committee was established by the Ministry of Culture and Education for the purpose of ensuring that school operations complied with the Equal Rights Act, as applicable in the area of education. A report compiled by the committee was published in 1990 under the title Equal Status of the Sexes in Schools, Policy-Aims-Means. The following main objectives are specified in the report: all school work should encourage independence and self-respect and prepare both sexes equally for active participation in family life, general employment and contributing to society as a whole.

During the last few years, courses and seminars have been organised in schools and for various groups of educators and educational material on equal rights has been published. Iceland has participated in a Nordic project on gender equality in teacher education since 1992.

5.5. ADDICTION PREVENTION

In accordance with the law on Compulsory Education, one of the objectives of compulsory schooling is to encourage the health of each individual pupil and addiction prevention measures are a part of the health education which compulsory schools are expected to provide. The National Curriculum Guide of 1989 lists for the first time the objective of preventive measures in schools concerning education on the use of alcohol and other addictive substances. The Ministry has followed up on this provision in the Curriculum Guide, for instance, with an agreement with Quest International in the USA to co-operate with the Association of Lions Clubs in Iceland in translating and adapting the educational material *Life Skills*. The material was published in Icelandic in 1990 and is intended for use by youngsters between 11 and 14 years of age. The educational material was reviewed in 1993. To use the material in schools or in other work with youngsters, teachers are required to attend a three-day preparatory information course. Such courses have been held annually since 1988 for a total of approximately one-third of all the *grunnskóli* teachers in Iceland, and the Ministry has employed a special supervisor for this project since 1988. No dependable research is available on the success of the use of this material in compulsory schools.

6. TEACHING STAFF

6.1. TEACHER EDUCATION

New legislation on the University College of Education adopted in 1988 provided for a four-year programme of teacher education following the conclusion of university entrance study in upper secondary school or equivalent education. The main reason given for extending the length of teacher education was that the three-year study failed to prepare teachers sufficiently for teaching in compulsory schools. The provision on four years of study has not been implemented and was postponed indefinitely. This provision introduces a change to the Teacher Education Act of 1971. The entrance requirements for teacher education during the period 1984-94 have not been changed, as a matriculation examination or comparable education has been considered sufficient preparation for teacher education.

Laws concerning the University College of Education do introduce the innovation that teachers shall, upon completing continuous study and receiving their teaching certificate, be provided with professional supervision and on-the-job training for at least one year.

Laws of 1988 concerning the University College of Education authorise the institution, having received the agreement of the Minister for Culture and Education, to establish a programme of post-graduate study in education which shall conclude with a degree superior to the BEd or BA degree. Post-graduate study of this sort has been introduced at the University College of Education to a limited extent.

The law which established the University College of Education in 1971 authorised the school to offer teachers one year of further education after their graduation. In the years 1974-90 teachers were, for example, offered further training in mathematics, assessment and curriculum studies, special education, art and crafts, Icelandic and school administration.

Since 1985, the University College of Education has offered a 12-credit teaching skills programme for practising teachers in schools around the country. The programme examines how teachers can best meet the varying individual needs of their pupils.

In 1985, a special two-year course in special education was established. This programme was comprised of two 30-credit components and upon completion students were awarded a BA degree.

In 1989, a 15-credit course for school administrators was offered for the first time.

The 1988 University College of Education Act authorised the school to offer a course of study leading to a diploma in education as well as a post-graduate study programme leading to the degree MEd, and to award doctoral degrees. The Ministry of Culture and Education gave its approval in 1994 and the first students with MEd degrees graduated in 1995.

6.2. PROMOTION

The main possibility of promotion for teachers at compulsory school level is to become an assistant principal or school principal. Promotion of this kind does not take place automatically. Formal administrative training is not a prerequisite for these posts but it is usually considered to be an advantage if the applicant has administrative training and administrative experience.

Since 1989, specific tasks, apart from teaching, performed by teachers at compulsory school level have been defined. This work includes duties such as supervision of a year group or a subject. Teachers are assigned these tasks for a specific period of time and their assignment may be renewed if an agreement to that effect is reached.

6.3. EDUCATION OF INSTRUCTORS

It has been common practice in Icelandic schools over the years for unqualified staff to instruct in compulsory schools. This was the result of a shortage of qualified teachers and might be described as especially characteristic of certain rural areas. Qualified teachers have also often sought more remunerative employment. In 1986, special legislation was passed to give legal protection to the designation "compulsory school teacher" *(grunnskólakennari)* and school principal *(skólastjóri)*. The Act specified the qualifications required to be called a compulsory school teacher and the conditions for the employment of unqualified instructors. By law, instructors may only be employed for a year at a time, and their positions must be advertised for application each year and special permission for their appointment must be sought from an exemption committee of the Ministry of Culture and Education.

Instructors teaching in compulsory schools have been offered studies to obtain teachers' qualifications on a distance learning basis by the University College of Education. The course of study extends over six years. There is no legal provision for this study programme, but the Ministry of Culture and Education has approved it by allocating funding in its annual budget. A great number of teachers have taken advantage of this programme. The objective is to ensure that teachers in compulsory schools possess the qualifications required and the situation in this respect has improved greatly since the Act on the Legal Protection of the Designation Compulsory School Teacher and School Principal was adopted. There are still a large number of unqualified teachers in compulsory schools, especially in thinly populated rural areas and as part-time teachers, but their numbers decline with each passing year. Reforms in the area of basic teacher education and in-service training are among the most important in the Icelandic school system during the decade concerned.

7. COMPENSATING FOR INEQUALITIES

7.1. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The emphases in special education changed to a certain extent between the Compulsory Education Act of 1974 and that of 1991. In the 1974 law, the need for special education is defined on medical grounds. The 1991 law, on the other hand, states that all pupils with learning difficulties, emotional or social problems and/or handicaps have a right to studies suitable to their needs. The emphasis in organising teaching has also changed, as the 1991 law clearly states that pupils have the right to instruction in their local school, if at all possible. Prior to this, the assumption was that pupils who were regarded as lacking the ability required for mainstream schooling should be taught in specialised institutions.

The National Curriculum Guide of 1989 is based on the premise that the same objectives apply to all pupils, regardless of academic ability. The objectives of the Curriculum Guide are developed in more detail for pupils with special needs and may involve individual curricula, class curricula or school curricula, depending upon the needs of the individual. In connection with the reorganisation of special education studies at the University College of Education and the programme of instruction in teaching skills for practising teachers, efforts began around 1985 to work specifically towards considering the needs of each individual and developing the objectives of the National Curriculum Guide with these in mind.

There has been little change to the counselling and psychological services provided in schools during the period concerned, but the 1991 law does provide for one important change, the authorisation to establish pupils' protection councils (*nemendaverndarráð*) in compulsory schools. The role of the pupils' protection council is to co-ordinate the efforts of parties responsible for the affairs of individual pupils in the areas of special education, counselling, psychological services and primary health care.

7.2. PUPILS WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS NOT ICELANDIC

People of foreign extraction have increased in number in Iceland in recent years and the need to provide education suited to the needs of pupils whose mother tongue is not Icelandic has grown. Various actions have been taken to build up provision for these pupils since 1992.

In the spring of 1992, the Minister of Education appointed a task force to organise the teaching of Icelandic for immigrants. The group submitted its proposals in October of that year. These proposals have formed the basis of subsequent teaching programmes and take into consideration the practical experience which has already been gained in the teaching of immigrants. The main objectives are to teach them Icelandic as a second language, help them to adapt to Icelandic society in general and enable them to attend schools in Iceland. They are expected to retain their mother tongue and cultural identity.

In the autumn of 1993, there was extensive reorganisation of the services provided for immigrant children in Icelandic schools. Additional government funds were made available for organisational and experimental work and these funds have been increased every year since. The Ministry appointed two project leaders, in-service training of teachers was increased, course materials were prepared and published, and the teaching of immigrants was given more structure. A few beginners' classes for immigrants have been established, emphasising the teaching of Icelandic and assisting immigrants in learning how to adapt to Icelandic society.

MAIN SOURCES USED

Committee on educational policy, Reykjavik, 1994, 122 p.

National Curriculum Guide, Reykjavik, 1989.

Towards a new century, Reykjavik, 1991, 191 p.

LIECHTENSTEIN

From 1984 to 1994, no fundamental or radical reforms were undertaken in the education system of Liechtenstein. This period was more of a time for experimenting with different school models and for carrying out discussions on educational issues. Impetus for an initial wide-ranging discussion came from a brochure entitled *Schule wohin*? (Schools: where next?) commissioned by the royal government and published by the *Schulamt* (school authority) in 1984. This brochure addressed key educational issues, such as when pupils transfer to secondary schools and whether an examination should be used to guide this transition. Other questions touched on the transparency of secondary education. It was also asked whether current curricula still fulfilled their mission of providing teaching staff with the means of performing their daily tasks, and whether these curricula were not overloaded. Building on feedback received from various associations as well as from citizens at large, a committee appointed by the government of the principality published a report in 1987. In this report, the committee presented several key ideas which were subsequently implemented. The implementation of these key ideas was, however, never associated with a major reform, and instead led to a gradual and thoroughly reflected development of the school system.

The transfer procedures for moving up from primary to secondary school have long been a source of discussion. The three-stage procedure was simplified somewhat in 1983. Whereas this procedure previously consisted of a teacher's recommendation as to the type of school most appropriate for the pupil (weighted 60%), an achievement test (weighted 40%) and a school readiness test administered by the school psychology service. This test was dropped as of the 1983/84 school year. Despite this adjustment, the brochure *Schule wohin*? once again took up the question as to how the transfer could be organized in ways less stressful for pupils. Although discussions on the transfer procedure never stopped, no solution was found by the end of 1993. However, as of the 1995/96 school year, tests will no longer be administered and pupils will be assigned to certain school types using a recommendation system. Based on specific observations, teaching staff will recommend a certain type of school to parents for their children. In the event that parents and teachers cannot agree, additional experts can be called in to give their opinions.

Building on the basic idea that pupils with learning disabilities and behavioural problems should be integrated in normal classes wherever possible, an experimental *Ergänzungsunterricht* (completion class) was introduced between 1986 and 1990 first in primary schools, then from 1990 also in secondary schools. "Completion classes" provide specific support teaching to pupils on an individual or small-group basis. The positive response such classes received led the government of the principality to prolong the experiment and, as of 1995, to issue a regulation that governs its implementation as a special school measure. Attendance at *Hilfschulen*, or special education schools where pupils with learning disabilities and behavioural problems were taught separately, dropped off completely as a result of this measure, such that these schools were subsequently closed.

Experience with comprehensive types of pupil assessments has been gathered at lower and upper primary level since 1982. Numerical marks are no longer assigned at either of these two levels; instead, at least one parent-teacher meeting is held each semester. In addition, pupils receive written comments addressed to them in the form of a short letter.

Drawing on key ideas regarding pupil assessment taken from the 1987 *Schule wohin*? brochure, on positive feedback regarding the assessment system used for the lower and upper primary school levels as well as on the findings of a Swiss project, a school project entitled *Schülerbeurteilung and Schulentwicklung* (Pupil assessment and school development) was launched in Liechtenstein. During the 1990/91 school year, two teams of primary school teachers prepared intensively – in addition to their normal duties – for the start of the project in the following school year. The aim of this project is to create a school without numerical marks. However, it is not simply a question of eliminating marks as such, but rather of developing new forms of pupil assessment. The project also aims to do justice to the specific talents, abilities and interests of individual pupils within a given class. During the implementation period, the teaching teams will be closely guided and advised by recognised experts in the field of adult education and school development. In the 1993/94 school year, the teaching team of one primary school prepared for the project and in the 1995/96 school year five teaching teams from other primary schools became involved. Numerical marks should be abolished in all primary schools in Liechtenstein by the year 2000 and pupils should then be taught and assessed in accordance with the new findings. If this goal is achieved, Liechtenstein will certainly have taken a significant step in the development of its education system.

At the beginning of the 1985/86 school year, an *Einführungsklasse* (introductory class) was set up on an experimental basis in a primary school. The purpose of this class is to facilitate the integration in school life of children who, at the time they start school, demonstrate little interest in school as well as weaknesses and delayed development in certain specific areas. Previously, the *Vorschulkindergarten* (pre-school kindergarten) offered the only opportunity of this kind. The objective of the *Vorschulkindergarten* is to make up for developmental deficiencies through play-based learning activities. By contrast, the two-year *Einführungsklasse* is oriented towards the learning situation that awaits children in primary school. In order to prepare children in the best possible way for the learning pace of primary school, the content of the first primary school level is divided up over a two-year period. The school experiment, initially limited to two years, was extended for an additional two years. As of the 1988/89 school year, the government enabled other primary schools to set up *Einführungsklassen*. As of the 1990/91 school year, children in all large municipalities in one district – Liechtenstein is divided into two election districts – could attend an *Einführungsklasse*. In the other district, a central *Vorschulkindergarten* is still in operation.

In the *Schule wohin*? brochure published in 1987, the key idea committee proposed keeping the first and third Saturdays of the month lesson-free. This was to be achieved by reducing the number of weekly lessons. At the beginning of the 1989/90 school year, certain lessons were cut and Saturdays were generally declared free. At the same time, the school year started for the first time in the autumn (start of school year moved from spring to autumn).

In 1992, equal rights for men and women were anchored in Liechtenstein's constitution. As a consequence, all laws and ordinances were reviewed to ensure that they provided equal treatment and opportunities for men and women. It was discovered that inequalities existed at the primary and secondary education levels with respect to home economics, crafts/workshops and gymnastics. Committees prepared proposals to amend the situation and, from the start of the 1993/94 school year, boys and girls are treated equally at all school levels.

No changes took place in the administration of, or responsibility for, education in the 1984-1994 period.

MAIN SOURCES USED

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Brochure: *Schule wohin? - Teil 2. Leitideen für das liechtensteinische Schulwesen. Bericht der Leitideen-Kommission.* Liechtensteinisches Schulamt. 1987.

Brochure: *Das Schülerbeurteilungsverfahren der 1. Und 2. Primarschulklasse im Fürstentum Liechtenstein.* Schulamt des Fürstentums Liechtenstein.

Brochure: *Schulische Fördermassnahmen. Information über die schulischen Fördermassnahmen im Fürstentum Liechtenstein.* Schulamt des Fürstentums Liechtenstein. 1991.

Brochure: *Schule heute. Mitteilungs- und Verlautbarungsorgan des Schulamtes des Fürstentums Liechtenstein.* Sonderausgabe zum Projekt «*Schülerbeurteilung und Schulentwicklung*». Schulamt des Fürstentums Liechtenstein. 1990.

Systematische Sammlung der liechtensteinischen Rechtsvorschriften. Band 4. *Schule - Wissenschaft - Kultur.* Regierung des Fürstentums Liechtenstein. GMG JURIS Verlags AG, Schaan.

NORWAY

I. DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF THE MAIN REFORMS

In 1969, the Norwegian *Storting* (National Assembly) adopted a new Education Act which extended compulsory schooling *(grunnskole)* from seven to nine years. This led to the preparation of a national curriculum for the compulsory school. This was produced initially as a proposal and then in a provisional version before being published in its final form in **The Curriculum Guidelines for Compulsory Education in Norway, 1974 (M 74).** This curriculum applied up to the school year 1986/87. That year, a revised version of the Curriculum Guidelines was completed. This revision of the Curriculum Guidelines represents one of the most important reforms during the period 1984-94.

The revision of M 74 can be explained in the light of the reforms that took place during the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, decentralization was an over-riding objective of national education policy. The architects of the reform wished to improve the knowledge and understanding of all persons concerned with the school community, encourage their participation and enhance their ability to accept responsibility for their own decisions.

In the 1970s, this objective was reflected in practice by making M 74 not an explicit curriculum but curriculum guidelines, or a framework curriculum. It gave room for the development of local teaching plans at school level. A system was introduced which laid down the minimum number of weekly periods to be completed during the six years of primary education and the three years of lower secondary education (i.e. the two stages of compulsory education). This implied that each school had a certain number of weekly periods to use as it liked for specific purposes. New cooperating bodies, such as a parents' council, pupils' council and cooperating committee were also established at each school.

At central level, a Parents' Committee was established under the Council for the *Grunnskole*, as a forum through which the parents could express their standpoints. In addition, the Council for the *Grunnskole*, as an advisory body for the Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, was made responsible for further developing the curriculum guidelines.

The 1970s also saw the re-organisation of special education. In 1975, the Special Education Act was incorporated into the Education Act governing compulsory education in general. This meant that the municipalities were given responsibility for providing suitably adapted education and special teaching as needed for all children of compulsory school age. The teaching should preferably take place in the children's home community. In practice, this meant that special schools were closed down. Resources were allocated for teaching the children concerned after individual assessment by experts.

The reform to the legislation led to an extended concept of education. Suitably adapted education became a basic concept; this was a service which was to apply to all children. This implied in addition that education, in its extended form, became less academic, i.e. less closely linked to the school itself. It became possible to alternate between attendance at school, employment and participation in other cultural and/or social activities.

M 74 was reviewed and revised during the period 1974-87, work which resulted in **The Curriculum Guidelines of 1987 (M 87).** This document was also published first as a proposal, to be distributed to all parties concerned for comment, and then in provisional form before the final version was considered by the *Storting* in spring 1987. In the course of this process, all levels of the school system had an opportunity to comment on the content of the proposed curriculum guidelines.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The revision was found to be necessary for several reasons: social conditions were changing, others were taking over the caring functions traditionally carried out by the family, and there had been a major increase in knowledge. With a view to the future development of society, the Ministry wanted to strengthen the communication of knowledge and of values in the school. The content of the education should include both centrally defined basic material and locally oriented subject matter. Optional subjects were strengthened and reflected the extended concept of education. More emphasis was placed on the school environment, and pupils and parents were drawn in as important participating groups. The children's need for security and care was emphasized, for example, through stronger cooperation between school, home and the local environment. These priorities were expressed in the wording and content of the Guidelines.

As a management tool, the curriculum guidelines were prepared with the intention of dividing the responsibility and authority between the different levels and the different parties involved. A principle of management by objectives was presented in the reports to the *Storting* leading to the preparation of M 87. At the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, however, this principle was made fundamental. The evaluation carried out by OECD in 1987 endorsed the value of management by objectives. The strategy is not to be limited to the education system alone, but to become a general feature of the management of the entire public sector. This political course is expressed, for example, in a White Paper (Report No. 37 (1990/91) to the *Storting*) which set the course for the re-organisation of the educational sector at national level. Several advisory bodies, including the Council for the *Grunnskole* and the Council for Upper Secondary Education, were dissolved. The Parents' Committee was no longer linked to the Council for the *Grunnskole*, its secretariat being moved to the the Ministry. The Minister for Education now appoints the members of the committee. This structural reform implied a re-casting of the educational system at all levels, and paved the way for the work on a new national curriculum.

In the early 1990s, work was therefore started to develop a **new curriculum (L 97) for the *grunnskole***, or compulsory education, which would replace M 87. The curriculum was to consist of a general part, or core curriculum, which was common to compulsory school, the upper secondary school and adult education. This core curriculum was put into effect from 1993, and replaced the first chapter of M 87: The task of the *grunnskole*. In 1997, a new curriculum will be published comprising the general part and an introduction to the subject-specific part, which will define the principles and guidelines for the structure, organisation and content of the compulsory school. The last part of the curriculum contains the syllabuses for the different subjects.

The reasons for the revisions to the curriculum are the marked changes in children's, adolescents' and adults' living conditions and the major reforms in education. The reforms are connected with the lowering of the age for starting school to 6 years (instead of 7), the system of organised after-school activities and the right to three years of upper secondary education for all.

Children will start school at age 6 as from autumn 1997, and will then attend compulsory school for 10 years. Because of a new, lower initial year, the intention of the curriculum is to integrate the best from pre-school education and the teaching methods already used in the early years.

At the turn of the year 1990/91, national funds were made available to help establish and operate a system of organised after-school activities. The purpose was to offer parents supervision of their children after the end of normal school hours. The Ministry wants to extend the arrangement and intends to link such services to cultural and recreational activities in the local community. It is an expressed objective that the school should open the way for interaction with other sectors of society, a perspective which should also be taken into account in the other areas of the curriculum.

Reform 94 deals with the right, by law, to three-years' upper secondary education for all. The Ministry's goal is to consider the tasks and content of the compulsory school in relation to this reform. This goal is expressed, for example, by having a general core curriculum that applies to both these stages of education. This perspective will also be reflected in the other areas of the curriculum.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE REFORMS INTRODUCED IN THE DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL AREAS

Part I above summarizes the reforms affecting the structure and content of education. The reforms are expressed in more specific terms in changes to the legislation, the curriculum, or curriculum guidelines, and how the system of education is organised.

Part II focuses on the changes made to the **curriculum** during the period 1984-94. Changes applying in other areas of education will be incorporated into the description of the reform to the curriculum.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Act of 13 June 1969 concerning the Compulsory School extended compulsory education from seven to nine years. It includes the following:

> *"The compulsory school shall, in agreement and cooperation with the home, give the pupils a Christian and moral upbringing, develop their mental and physical abilities, and give them good general knowledge so that they may become useful and independent human beings at home and in society.*
>
> *The school shall promote intellectual freedom and tolerance, and strive to create good forms of cooperation between teachers and pupils and between school and home".*

This declaration of principle formed the basis for the work on the Curriculum Guidelines, which were published provisionally in 1971 and in their final version in 1974.

The Curriculum Guidelines of 1974 (M 74) consisted of a general part and a subject-specific part. Unlike the standard curriculum, they did not specify minimum requirements for the different subjects. Instead, they gave guidelines for the work of the school and encouraged the school to adapt the curriculum to local needs. This is why the document was called a framework curriculum, or curriculum guidelines.

The Curriculum Guidelines of 1987 (M 87) constituted a revised version of M 74, following the same line of thinking. They recommend adapting the curriculum and the school activities to suit local conditions. In principle, the subject syllabuses had to include some specifically defined subject matter that was common for all, which would be supplemented and adapted to local conditions.

2. THE GENERAL PART OF M 87

M 87 consists of two parts: a general part and a subject-specific part. The general part states the basic goals and principles for the overall activity of the school.

The general part of M 87 is essentially the same as in M 74. The difference lies in a certain re-organisation of the content and some changes in the headings to the different chapters. Certain areas of study are given stronger emphasis.

M 87 underlines the importance of **equitable and suitably adapted education**, giving the pupils the best possible opportunities for development in accordance with their abilities and aptitudes. The principle is reflected in practice in the amendment to the 1975 legislation. The Special Education Act was incorporated into the Act relating to the *grunnskole*, which applies to all pupils of compulsory school age.

The reform gave the curriculum guidelines an extended area of application, since they would now form the practical basis for the teaching of all children. This also led to an extended concept of education. Suitably adapted education is just as valid in a practical, social, cultural, physical or aesthetic context as in a theoretical perspective. It is equally relevant for pupils with outstanding abilities and aptitudes as for pupils with special educational needs who require special help.

According to M 87, children with special educational needs have a right to special education after assessment by experts. This education should take place within the framework of the class rather than by grouping pupils by ability and aptitude.

M 87 also emphasizes the importance of providing suitable education for Sami pupils, who are part of the indigenous Norwegian population, and for pupils from language minority groups.

It is emphasized that cooperation between **the home and the school** is an important element of the efforts to provide suitably adapted education. This cooperation is embodied in Norwegian law, which gives the parents the main responsibility for the upbringing and education of their children. This responsibility is underlined in the declaration of principle in the Education Act. In organisational terms, the principle can be traced back to the councils and committees established in the 1970s, when a cooperating body was elected at each school and an advisory Parents' Committee at central level.

This cooperation can refer to the individual pupils, but can also be an element of the **local development work**, where the various parties concerned make a combined effort to improve their own school.

The emphasis on local development work is reflected in the national and international development projects of the 1970s and 1980s. The disbanding of the National Council for Innovations in Education in 1985 also assumed that the work of renewing and improving the school would now take place at local level.

According to M 87, the development work can apply to different aspects of the school's activity. It is a prerequisite that the work should be based on the common platform reflected in the principles of the curriculum guidelines. It includes practical application of the subject syllabuses through local teaching plans and programmes of work.

The curriculum guidelines also assume active participation by the pupils, in line with the principle of **learning to accept responsibility**. In the chapter on the learning environment and teaching methods, it is stated that the school should stimulate the pupils' need for activity and give them opportunities to use their own experience in the task of learning. The pupils should formulate their own questions and look for the answers. This principle applies to both the planning and practice of the teaching. One of the objectives is to teach the pupils to accept responsibility for themselves, for their relationships with others and for the environment in which they live. This will help them to learn the **ethical values** on which the education is based.

The principle of learning to accept responsibility is really a continuation of the educational reforms embodied in the earlier standard curricula and in M 74, but with greater emphasis on the aspect of values. Another characteristic feature of M 87 is its focus on life in the local community. The pupils are regarded as important players in a school that is actively involved in the local community.

M 87 emphasizes that working on subject matter from the local environment and the local community enhances the pupils' opportunities to use their own experiences as a basis for further learning at school. It is stated in principle that the subject matter should be locally oriented but this approach has not received priority, at least in relation to the subject matter specified for all schools in the country.

3. THE SUBJECT-SPECIFIC PART OF M 87

The subject-specific part of the curriculum is organised differently in M 87 compared with M 74. A characteristic feature of M 74 was the large diversity of syllabuses covering both compulsory subjects, optional subjects and areas of study. In M 87 the number of subject syllabuses is halved.

Unlike M 74, M 87 does not contain alterative syllabuses for mathematics. For classes 1 to 6, the subjects home economics, social science and natural science are combined into one combined syllabus for "civics". In addition, 10 of the syllabuses for compulsory or optional subjects with a social orientation are integrated into other subject syllabuses.

M 74 presents 18 subject syllabuses for the pupils to choose from at the second stage of the *grunnskole*. In M 87 these optional subject syllabuses are reduced to two; one offers a language option and the other includes the rest of the optional subjects. These syllabuses are models and set up general didactic elements to be defined more specifically in the syllabuses prepared by the school itself.

All in all, M 87 contains syllabuses for fewer subjects/areas of study than presented in M 74. Despite this fact, the curriculum includes some additions to the series of syllabuses. Two such additions are the syllabuses for "general moral and religious education" and for "other moral and religious education". These subjects are offered to pupils who are exempted from the traditional course of religious education based on the Christian faith.

In addition, the two syllabuses for teaching the mother tongue have been increased to six, including various Sami language options and the mother tongue for language minority groups. Another innovation is the syllabus for practical, social and cultural work, to be integrated into the syllabuses for the compulsory subjects. The purpose of this syllabus is to link the process of learning in the school to life and activities in the local community, and create a balance between theoretical and practical education. This is again in line with the extended concept of education.

Another thing about M 87 is that the **subject syllabuses has been simplified.** M 74 states the main objectives for the subject, distributes the topics of study across three levels, and contains detailed proposals, using key words, for annual teaching plans for each year. The syllabuses also contain a general description of the subject matter, working methods, teaching aids and forms of evaluation for the subject in question.

The subject syllabuses in M 87, on the other hand, contain an introductory paragraph on the reasons for learning the subject, but the section on evaluation has been removed. The subject matter, including the areas of study and topics, is arranged in three-year blocks. M 87 does not set up teaching plans for each separate year.

Thus the organisation of the subjects is simpler in M 87. The richness of detail in M 74 is replaced by syllabuses containing elements of a more general nature. These elements have to be elaborated more specifically at local level, where the persons actually involved can decide to a greater extent what subject matter will be studied and how it will be organised. At the same time, the frameworks defined in M 87 are more binding. Unlike M 74, M 87 defines some specific subject matter that all pupils are required to study. The main areas of study and component topics can be changed only in special cases. The main responsibility of the various persons involved is to organise the general subject matter, and supplement it with local material. This method of approach gives the various participants at school level more responsibility and commitment in relation to the guidelines developed by the central authorities.

4. THE CORE CURRICULUM FOR THE *GRUNNSKOLE*, UPPER SECONDARY AND ADULT EDUCATION

A new core curriculum came into effect in September 1993. It applies to the compulsory school *(grunnskole)*, the upper secondary school and adult education. As far as compulsory education is concerned, the core curriculum replaces the first chapter of the Curriculum Guidelines of 1987.

This core curriculum constitutes the first part of a new curriculum for ten-year compulsory education, which will apply as from autumn 1997. The new curriculum will be distributed to the schools in 1996, to be used as a basis for planning and organisation of the education and of initial and in-service training. It is also intended to be used as a basis for the preparation of new textbooks and teaching material.

The need for a new curriculum is connected with changes in living conditions, for children, adolescents and adults alike. Parents spend a large share of their time outside the family, in employment, and are therefore no longer able, as in the past, to tie them to training and work. During the last decade, society has been subjected to increasing pressure from international media, and several cultures are represented in the Norwegian school. The educational reforms are a reaction to these developments. The structure of the school must correspond to the content it is intended to communicate. The measures should not take the form of minor changes but more comprehensive reforms with a common objective. The core curriculum - or the general part of the new curriculum - provides a common starting point for the planning and implementation of other reforms.

The reform of compulsory education contains four main elements. First it is a **school reform**, where the starting age is lowered to six years and the period of education extended to ten years, instead of nine as before. Secondly it is a **child-oriented reform**. The school must help to provide good conditions for children as they grow up, a richness of impulses, and opportunities for learning and play. The children must have opportunities to do things on their own, and for various kinds of activities together with adults in different roles. Thirdly, it is a **family-oriented** reform. It emphasizes cooperation between home, school and the local community and a further extension of the system of organised after-school activities, so that children feel safe and happy while their parents are at work. Finally, it is a **cultural** reform. Activities in the local community, both artistic and craft, will be strengthened and further developed in cooperation with the school, the system of organised after-school activities and the municipal music schools.

The curriculum tries to create a wholeness and continuity of content throughout compulsory education and upper secondary education, which is also under reform. Reform 94 gives all pupils leaving the second stage of the *grunnskole* the right to three years' upper secondary education.

The general part, or core curriculum, is based on the declaration of principle in the Education Act. When working on the curriculum, the Ministry analysed the stated objectives and sorted them by content. The main themes found in the Act provided the basis for the structure of the curriculum and its sections. The section headings are the spiritual human being, the creative human being, the working human being, the liberally educated human being, the social human being, the environmentally aware human being and the complete human being.

The Ministry deliberately tried to avoid professional jargon when wording the curriculum, to make it understandable and accessible to many different target groups. The guidelines in the curriculum are general enough to apply to different types of schools, traditions and forms of teaching, but precise enough to give clear signals as to the design of the subject syllabuses and the everyday management of the school. Various goals are emphasized in the official curriculum document. These goals are something to work towards.

5. CONCERNING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR TEN-YEAR COMPULSORY EDUCATION – THE NEW CURRICULUM

The introductory section to the subject syllabuses was dealt with by the *Storting* in 1995 during consideration of White Paper No 19 (1994/95) on the principles and guidelines for ten-year compulsory education, and the new curriculum. Its specific function is to link the different subject syllabuses to the general part of the core curriculum. The principles and guidelines describe how the content of the core curriculum should be followed up and elaborated, keeping in mind the special features of the *grunnskole*. The introductory section is also intended to build a bridge between kindergarten, compulsory education and the upper secondary school.

The principles and guidelines apply to three areas:

The section on **one school for all - solidarity and suitably adapted education** gives important reasons and arguments for this two-fold objective; to provide a common foundation and simultaneously ensure opportunities for development in accordance with individual aptitudes and differences. The Ministry underlines that the development of an all-inclusive school must aim at a balance between consideration for the community and consideration for the individual.

The section on **the developmental and learning environment** concerns the desired cooperation within the school community and between home, school and local community. This cooperation should also include persons outside the school who are involved with children in various ways.

The content of compulsory education must be organised in accordance with the principles of progression, differentiation into subjects, and an increasing amount of common subject matter. The common subject matter to be taught throughout the country shall be extended and broadened as the children move upwards through the classes. This subject matter must be clearly defined and specify precisely the different subjects involved at the different levels. Thus it is stated specifically what material the pupils will meet and when, for each year in the initial stage (years 1-4), the intermediate stage (years 5-7) and the lower secondary stage (years 8-10). The local work on the syllabuses should be aimed at illustrating the subject matter in practice, to bring it alive, and at adapting the content to the pupils' experiences and abilities.

This part is an introduction to the subject syllabuses, and lays down certain guidelines as to how these should be structured. They must contain general information, as well as aims, content and themes of study, specified for the three stages of compulsory education: the initial, intermediate and the lower secondary stages.

These elements are defined for each year. The syllabuses must provide opportunities for cross-disciplinary teaching adapted to local conditions.

The syllabuses for the different subjects have been published in the form of a "hearing" document, i.e. a document to be distributed to all parties concerned for comment, and will be reviewed and further developed at the Ministry in spring 1996. In order to implement the curriculum in practice, it has been necessary to draw more groups of personnel into the work of the school. Competence will be developed through dissemination of information, special programmes for headteachers, in-service training and postgraduate education. One of the objectives is to get headteachers and other staff to understand and support the principles on which the new curriculum is founded, so that they feel committed to these principles in their everyday activities.

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EURYDICE

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The Information Network on Education in Europe

OBJECTIVES

The role of the EURYDICE network, the information network on education in Europe, is to promote the exchange of information on education systems and on national policies in the field of education. It contributes to increasing mutual understanding and cooperation between the 15 Member States of the European Union.[1]

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

In 1976, when the Council and the Education Ministers adopted the Resolution on a first programme for cooperation in the field of education, they gave recognition to the importance, in this context, of exchanges of information and experience. It was on this basis that the EURYDICE network was set up and became operational in 1980. Ten years later, in 1990, the Council and the Ministers adopted a Resolution dealing specifically with EURYDICE and calling for a reinforcement of its services. The Treaty of Maastricht (Treaty on European Union) marked an important step forward, providing in the new Chapter 3, Article 126, for developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States. It has thus opened up for EURYDICE new prospects of which the Community education programme, SOCRATES, adopted on 14 March 1995, takes full account (Annex, Chapter III, Action 3, point 2). It is under this Programme that the development of EURYDICE will be assured from now on.

ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES

The network comprises **22 National Units**, most of which are located in the Ministries of Education.[1] The **European Unit**, established by the European Commission, coordinates the network's activities, publications and services. It also promotes exchanges between the National Units to meet the information needs of national and Community policymakers. On the basis of contributions from the network, it produces basic documents and comparative analyses on topics of interest to cooperation at Community level. EURYDICE is also increasingly called upon to fulfil the role of an "Observatory", in relation to the development of the education systems and policies in the European Union. Through the dissemination of its publications, the EURYDICE network also reaches a wide public in the education world. These publications are also accessible on the Internet through the European Commission's Europa server (access code: http://europa.eu.int).

SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

- Data bases on the education systems.
- Various publications on education in the Member States.

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[1] Under the Agreement on the European Economic Area, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are participating in the activities of the EURYDICE network in the same way as the Member States of the European Union. Moreover, from 1996, the network activities will be open to the central and eastern European countries.

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